AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
United States of America

Muslims who believe in the Messiah,
*Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani*as*

An informational, literary, educational, and training magazine of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA

August-September 2013

The Ahmadiyya GAZETTE USA

Jalsa Salana Edition

Attendees of 2013 USA Jalsa Salana Listening to Jalsa Program

يٰلَيْتَ قَوْمِيْ يَعْلَمُوْنَ ۙ بِمَا غَفَرَلِيْ رَبِّيْ وَ جَعَلَنِيْ
مِنَ الْمُكْرَمِيْنَ ۝

yalaita qaumī ya'lamūna bimā ghafaralī rabbī wa ja'alanī mīnal mukramīn

'O, would that my people knew, 'How *graciously* my Lord has granted me forgiveness and has made me of the honored ones!' (36:27-28)

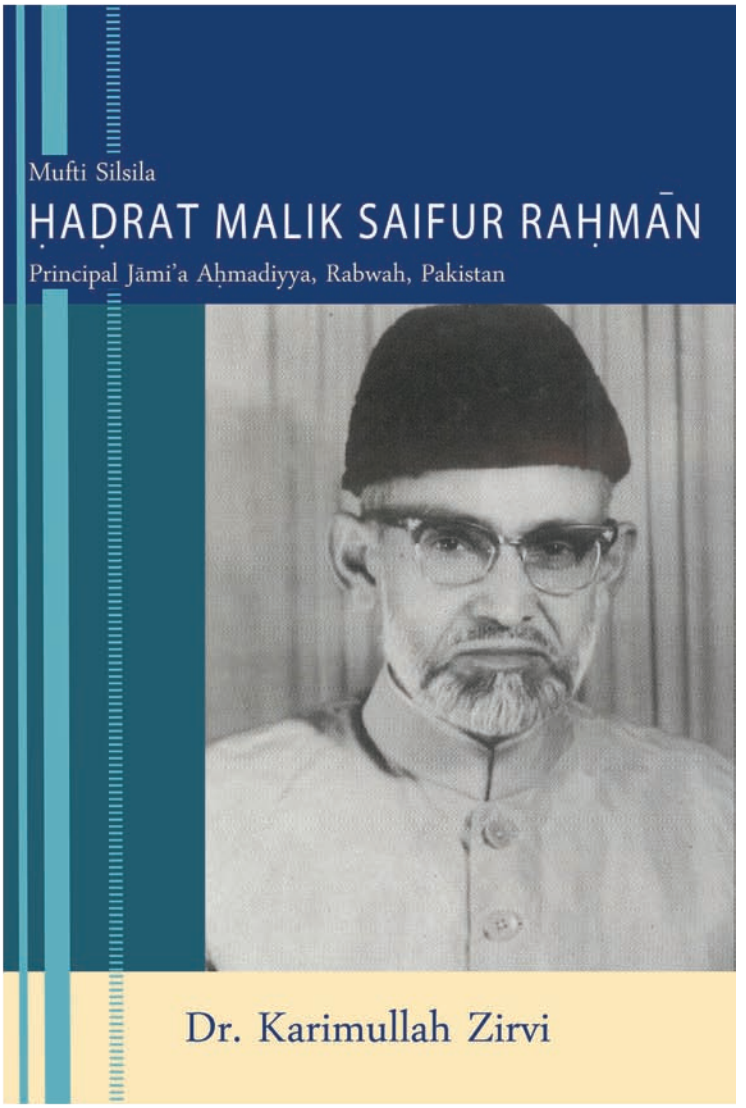
Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masiḥ V^{aba} said:

"There is no doubt that he (Ḥaḍrat Malik Saifur Raḥmān Ṣāḥib) was an outstanding learned man and had encompassed vast knowledge of the Holy Qur'ān, *Ḥadīth*, and different aspects of jurisprudence. ...One thing about him that always impressed me most was his extreme humility despite his distinct intellectual status and being in close proximity with the *Khulafā* and being entrusted by the *Khulafā* with some important intellectual works."

Ḥaḍrat Khalīfatul Masiḥ IVth said:

"It is possible that some of you may and some may not have read the life story of Malik Ṣāḥib. Those who have not read should read it; it is very interesting. By reading his life story, you will understand how God Almighty granted him mental evolution and how virtuous and pure was the end of his life."

(*Friday Sermon, November 3, 1989*)



Foreword to the book written by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}

The book can be purchased from:

i. *In charge Bookstore*
Baitur Rahman Mosque
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Silver Spring, MD 20905

301-879-0110

ii. *KZ Publications*
14-21 Saddle River Rd
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410

karimzirvi@yahoo.com
201-794-8122

PRICE OF THE BOOK: $10

An educational and spiritual monthly publication

Ahmadiyya Gazette USA

OFFICIAL GAZETTE OF THE AHMADIYYA MOVEMENT IN ISLAM, USA

August - September 2013

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Acronyms for salutations used in this publication

saw: sallallahu alaihi wasallam
(Peace and Blessing of Allah be upon him)
as: alaihissalam
(Peace be upon him)
ra: radhi allahu 'anhu
(May Allah be pleased with him/her)
rh: rahimahullahu ta'ala
(May Allah shower mercy on him/her)
aba: ayyada hullah ta'ala binasrihil aziz
(May Allah strengthen him with His mighty help)
swt: subhana wa ta'ala
(Holy and Exalted)

The Ahmadiyya Gazette USA is published by the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Inc., at the local address:

Fazl-i-Umar Press
P.O. Box 226, Chauncey, OH 45719

Periodicals Postage Paid at Chauncey, Ohio
Postmaster: Send address changes to
The Ahmadiyya Gazette
P.O. Box 226, Chauncey, OH 45719-0226

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Al-Qur'an

وَ اِلٰى ثَمُوْدَ اَخَاهُمْ صٰلِحًا ؕ قَالَ يٰقَوْمِ اعْبُدُوا اللّٰهَ مَالَكُمْ مِّنْ
اِلٰهٍ غَيْرُهٗ ؕ قَدْ جَآءَتْكُمْ بَيِّنَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّكُمْ ؕ هٰذِهٖ نَاقَةُ اللّٰهِ لَكُمْ اٰيَةً
فَذَرُوْهَا تَاْكُلْ فِيْٓ اَرْضِ اللّٰهِ وَلَا تَمَسُّوْهَا بِسُوْٓءٍ فَيَاْخُذَكُمْ
عَذَابٌ اَلِيْمٌ 0

And to Thamud *We sent* their brother Salih. He said, 'O my people, worship Allah; you have no god other than Him. Verily, there has come to you a clear evidence from your Lord -- this she-camel of Allah, a Sign for you. So leave her that she may feed in Allah's earth and do her no harm, lest a painful punishment sieze you. (7:74)

COMMENTARY:

The Thamud tribe lived in the western parts of Arabia, having spread from Aden northward to Syria. They lived shortly before the time of Ishmael. Their territory was adjacent to that of *'Ad*, but they lived mostly in the hills.

The Prophet Salih lived after Hud and was probably a contemporary of Abraham. The camel formed the chief means of conveyance in those parts and it was on his she-camel that the Prophet Salih used to travel from place to place to preach his message. Placing obstruction in the way of the free movements of the she-camel or doing it harm was tantamount to obstrecting the work with which God had entrusted Salih. There was nothing unusual about the she-camel itself. It was an ordinary animal. The sanctity that attached to it was that God had declared it to be a Sign and a symbol of the sanctity and inviolability of the person of the Prophet Salih, and so doing an injury to it was tantamount to doing asn injury to Salih himself and to hampering his work. The words do not mean that she was to be followed to graze in any field she entered. The meaning is that the obstruction was to be put in her way and that she was to be permitted to proceed to any place to which Salih might choose to go. The declaration by Salih about the free movements of his she-camel was in harmony with a time-honored Arab custom.

Al-Hadith

عَنْ زَيْدِ بْنِ اَرْقَمَ قَالَ قَامَ رَسُوْلُ اللّٰهِ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ سَلَّمَ يَوْمًا فِيْنَا خَطِيْبًا فَحَمِدَ اللّٰهَ وَ اَثْنٰى عَلَيْهِ وَ وَعَظَ وَ ذَكَّرَ ثُمَّ قَالَ: اَمَّا بَعْدُ اَلاَ اَيُّهَا النَّاسُ فَاِنَّمَا اَنَا بَشَرٌ يُوْشِكُ اَنْ يَّاْتِيَ رَسُوْلُ رَبِّيْ فَاُجِيْبَ وَ اَنَا تَارِكٌ فِيْكُمْ ثَقَلَيْنِ اَوَّلُهُمَا كِتَابُ اللّٰهِ فِيْهِ الْهُدٰى وَ النُّوْرُ فَخُذُوْا بِكِتَابِ اللّٰهِ وَ اسْتَمْسِكُوْا بِهٖ فَحَثَّ عَلٰى كِتَابِ اللّٰهِ وَ رَغَّبَ فِيْهِ ثُمَّ قَالَ وَ اَهْلُ بَيْتِيْ اُذَكِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهَ فِيْ اَهْلِ بَيْتِيْ - اُذَكِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهَ فِيْ اَهْلِ بَيْتِيْ - اُذَكِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهَ فِيْ اَهْلِ بَيْتِيْ -

مسلم كتاب فضائل الصحابة باب من فضائل علي رضي الله عنه

Hadhrat Zaid bin Arqam[ra] relates that one day, the Messenger[saw] of Allah stood up and addressed them. He praised Allah and glorified Him and then delivered a sermon and said: "O people! Beware! I am a human being. A call to leave this world may come from my Lord and I leave this world. I will be leaving behind two valuable things with you. The foremost of them is the Book of Allāh, which is full of light and guidance. Hold fast and adhere to it. He urged and persuaded us to the Book of Allah. Then he said: 'And *'Ahl-e-Bai'at'* - my family. I remind you to remember Allāh, regarding my family. I remind you to remember Allah regarding my family, I remind you to remember Allah, regarding my family.' "

(Muslim kitab faḍā'iluṣṣaḥābah bāb min faḍā'il 'Alī[ra])

SAYINGS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH[AS]

Recognising a True Faith

In order to recognise a true religion it is necessary to look at three matters. In the first place, one must see what is the teaching of a religion concerning God. That is to say, what does a religion state with regard to the Unity, power, knowledge, perfection, greatness, punishment, mercy and other attributes of the Divine. . .

Secondly, it is necessary that a seeker after truth should inquire what does a religion teach with regard to his own self and with regard to human conduct. Is there anything in its teaching which would disrupt human relationships, or would draw a person into courses which are inconsistent with modesty and honour, or would be contrary to the law of nature, or would be impossible to conform to or carry out, or make it dangerous to do so. It would also be necessary to see whether some important teaching needed to control disorderliness has been left out. It would also be necessary to discover whether a religion presents God as a Great Benefactor with Whom a relationship of personal love should be established and whether it lays down commandments which lead from darkness into light and from heedlessness to remembrance.

Thirdly, it is necessary for a seeker after truth to satisfy himself that the god presented by a religion should not be one who is believed in on the basis of tales and stories and resembles a dead being. To believe in a god who resembles a dead being, belief in whom is not by virtue of his having manifested himself but is due to one's own good faith, would be to put him under an obligation. It is useless to believe in a god whose powers are not felt and who does not himself make manifest the signs of his own existence and life.

[Naseem-e-Dawat, Ruhani Khazain, Vol. 19, pp. 373-374]

The religion that claims to be from God must show signs of being from God and should bear the seal of God, which should attest the fact that it is from God. Islam is such a religion. That God Who is hidden is known through this religion and manifests Himself to the true followers of this religion. A true religion is supported by the hand of God and through such religion God manifests Himself that He exists. The religions that depend entirely upon stories are only a form of idol worship. Such religions do not possess the spirit of truth. If God is alive as He was, and speaks and hears as He did, there is no reason why He should continue to be silent as if He does not exist. If He does not speak in this age, then equally and certainly He does not hear either. In other words, He is now nothing. That religion alone is true which demonstrates that God hears and speaks in this age also. In a true religion, God attests His existence through His speaking.

Search for God is a difficult matter. It is not an affair of worldly philosophers and wise men. Observation of the heavens and earth only leads to the conclusion that although orderliness indicates that the universe should have a Creator yet it is not proof that such a Creator in fact exists. There is a great deal of difference between **ought to be** and **is**. The Holy Qur'an is the only book that sets forth His existence as a fact and not only urges the seeking of God but makes Him manifest. There is no other book which makes manifest the Hidden Being.

[Chashmai Masihi, Ruhani Khazain, Vol. 20, pp. 351-352]

Synopsis of Friday Sermon Delivered by Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}, on August 2, 2013 at Baitul Futuh Mosque, Morden, UK

Shermeen Butt

Last Friday sermon was based on Divine commandments as cited in verses 152 – 154 of *Surah Al An'am*. Only the first three commandments, i.e. avoiding *Shirk*, kind treatment of parents and significance of good up-bringing of children by parents were elucidated. Today the other commandments about which God states: '... what your Lord has made inviolable for you...' were explained.

The fourth commandment in the verses is: '...that you approach not foul deeds, whether open or secret...' This commandment forbids different indecencies and foul acts. The word '*Fawahish*' has several meanings. It means fornication, exceeding in wrongness, an immoral act, various big sins and satanic deeds, saying and doing everything that is bad and as well as being very miserly. This commandment eradicates personal and societal evils and gives resolution for matters that spread evil in homes and society.

With reference to fornication, elsewhere in the Qur'an there is a specific punishment. If a married person is embroiled in it, he forgets the rights of his family and overlooks them and a woman embroiled in it also does not fulfill the rights of her husband and children. If the person is unmarried then he is guilty of spreading foulness and indecency in society. People forge relationships by making false promises and if due to family pressure, or pressure of society or indeed due to their own false promises, the relationship breaks down, men do not suffer so much. Particularly our Asian culture covers up for men but a woman's life is ruined. Such instances are commonly reported in newspapers. If children are born of such relationships, they are deprived of their rights and their parents become guilty of 'killing' their children. Here, in these countries, there are some legal safeguards for such children but there are many people who practically kill their children, whereas such children have no rights in underdeveloped countries. There, if the rich commit such foul acts, they are above the law. It was in the Pakistani news just a couple of days ago that a woman had an illegitimate child and perversely the police filed a case against the poor woman and nothing was said to the man because he had a social standing. It is the odd case that is reported, who is to know how many incidents of such nature take place and how many families are destroyed. This is due to being distant from God's commandments. When this is the condition of Muslims, how can we censure the others! Indeed God commands not to even go near foul deeds.

In this age many different means of foulness can be found. There is the internet with indecent web-sites, lewd films on TV and offensive, pornographic magazines. Voices have started being raised here now that such offensive publications should not be displayed openly in shops and stalls as it has an adverse effect on children's morality. They have realized this today while the Qur'an gave the teaching 1400 years ago to stay away from indecency, it makes one immoral, distant one from God and from religion and even makes one break the law. Islam does not only forbid obvious and apparent foulness but also hidden immorality. The directive of *Purdah* and wearing modest clothes are a safeguard against open and informal connection between men and women.

Islam does not state as the Bible does that do not look at women with bad intent. In fact, it states that your eyes will fall on women in close environment and it will create immodesty and you will not be able to distinguish

between good and bad. According to God and His Messenger in such open mixing of man and woman the third party is Satan. The internet was just mentioned. Chats on Facebook and Skype are included in this and Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih[aba] has seen many families break up because of this. He said he greatly regretted that such incidents are found in our Ahmadi homes. Whereas the commandment is not to even approach such foulness because Satan takes hold of one.

The beautiful teaching of the Qur'an commands both men and women to restrain their eyes, this indeed curtails open mixing as well as watching lewd films. The commandment also includes not to socialize with people who pursue such interests in the same of freedom, who relate their stories and try and incite others to their ways. Men and women should not chat on Skype and Facebook and look at each other and should not make these a means of connecting with each other. God states that these are all open and hidden foul things and they result in one getting carried away by emotions, losing one's sense and eventually incurring God's displeasure.

In this day and age another foul matter is being promoted which is not only against nature but a nation was once destroyed because of it. Governments are in the process of legalizing same-sex marriages, that is, plans are being made on governmental level to spread something foul and immoral. Some prime ministers are saying such laws should be followed across the globae. A priest, probably from South Africa, who obviously follows the Bible which states that a nation was destroyed because of homosexuality, has said that if same-sex married couples cannot go to Heaven, then he would prefer to go to Hell. Such is the extent of immorality in the world today, if it continues to spread like this, then these nations will witness their ending. It will make their life in this world hellish and God knows what treatment they will have in the Hereafter. Medical research has clearly proven that AIDS is fast spreading among homosexual people. God's punishment comes in varied forms. It is not necessary that the Divine punishment of stones from the sky will be repeated. HIV takes a person to a dreadful and excruciating end.

The faster immorality is spreading the greater should be an Ahmadi's efforts to connect to God and try and save himself and the world from its destruction. Worldly people are appeasing a certain section of society for political gains, and promoting something which is against the commandments of God, and wish to spread it in the entire world which will result in destruction. Out of sympathy for them, we should inform them that God is Ever Merciful, He has kept the door of forgiveness open. He states: 'And those who, when they commit a foul deed or wrong themselves, remember Allah and implore forgiveness for their sins — and who can forgive sins except Allah?' (3:136). God forgives if there is no persistency in all foul deeds and one has fear of God. We need to protect ourselves against all immoralities and also try and show the ways to do so to others.

The Promised Messiah[as] said: 'Their God will forgive those who whenever they commit a foul deed or wrong their souls, they remember Allah the Exalted and seek forgiveness for their sin and do not persist in their sin.'

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih[aba] prayed that may everyone who is embroiled in foul deeds comes to their senses and is saved from God's chastisement. He said he had explained this matter because he had felt a great need for it as this matter has become very common.

The next commandment is: '...you kill not the life which Allah has made sacred, save by right...' This directive draws our attention to pay the dues of society, to pay the dues of our brothers, friends and associates with fairness and justice. Killing here does not only connote taking the life of another. In fact, to break connections with someone, to usurp the rights of another, to emotionally injure another, to humiliate another as if practically killing them, to destroy their self-respect is also 'killing'. And then there is spiritual killing. God has deemed that these are all tantamount to killing and He has forbidden them. Each killing ultimately results in discord and unrest in society and God strongly dislikes this. The statement: '...save by right...'does not give the right to take the law in one's hand and the punishment should be limited to only what is necessary so that reformation may take place. It should be clear here that everyone does not have the right to punish and to retaliate.

This should be handled by the law and law should pass judgment according to the requisites of justice. Indeed, man-made laws are fairly recent whereas God had decreed this a long time ago. Death penalty and other various punishments are all given by and through law.

Killing also connotes the process of boycott. Only responsible organizations have a right to ex-communicate, boycott someone. Disciplinary procedures exist in our *Jama'at* also and these are for reformation purposes and not as a mark of cruelty. All restrictions are for the sake of reforming individuals, otherwise undue cruelty is also tantamount to killing. When judgment is passed by organizations in conflicts between two parties, obviously one party is deemed guilty. Sometimes, the other party, which has suffered loss etc. is unhappy with the level of the judgment and wants the judgment to be exactly as they wish it to be. If the contending parties are given the right to pass judgment one killing would follow another and the Qur'an commands against this. The real objective is to make people realize their mistake and reform.

The next commandment is in the following verse and it is: 'And approach not the property of the orphan, except in a way which is best...' This directive draws our attention to the most vulnerable segment of society; the orphans. The Property of orphans should be looked after in such a way so as not to incur loss but to make it beneficial. It should be used or invested as a trust. It should be looked after by the *Jama'at*, by the society and indeed by the law of the land. Property of orphans who have not reached an age of understanding should be invested in a way that enhances and increases it. It is a huge responsibility put on relatives and society as a whole. There is great admonishment regarding this responsibility. The Qur'an states: 'Surely, they who devour the property of orphans unjustly, only swallow fire into their bellies, and they shall burn in a blazing fire.' (4:11) Qur'anic commandments do not give rights to one party while usurping the rights of the other, therefore it is also stated that while looking after the property of orphans it is all right to spend some of it while meeting all the requisites of fairness. It is allowed to spend from an orphan's property on his education and upbringing, but it is also stressed not to exceed limits in this regard. Those who are well-off may not take anything from an orphan's property while he is in their care. Good, sound investment of an orphan's property should always be in view. It is then stated: '... till he attains his maturity...' That is, return his property to him at this stage. Sometimes an orphan will not have attained enough maturity upon entering adulthood, in this case his property should be continually looked after until he attains maturity. And if he has learning disability, then the property should be looked after on a permanent basis. If an orphan with learning disability gets married and has children, his property should be looked after until his children reach adulthood.

The Promised Messiah[as] wrote: 'That is, should there be among you a person of property who is an orphan or minor and it is apprehended that he would waste his property through his lack of sense, you should take charge of his property as a custodian and should not hand it over to him, inasmuch as the whole system of commerce and social security depends upon proper care of property. Out of the income of the property you should provide for the maintenance of its owner and you should instruct him in all equitable values that would help to develop his reason and understanding and would furnish him with proper training so that he should not remain ignorant and inexperienced. If he is the son of a merchant he may be instructed in the ways of business and commerce, and if his father followed some profession or other occupation he may be given training in some appropriate occupation. Test him from time to time whether he is making progress in his training. When he arrives at the age of maturity, that is to say about 18 years, and you perceive that he has developed enough intelligence to look after his property, hand over his property to him. Do not deal with his property wastefully while it is in your charge, out of the apprehension that when he grows up he will take it over from you. If the custodian is in easy circumstances he should not make any charge for administering the property. But if he is poor, let him make use of as much of it as is fair.

The custom among Arab custodians of an orphan's property was that the property was used as capital for commerce and out of its profit provision was made for the orphan and thus the capital was not destroyed. The custodian made a fair charge for looking after the property. This is the system to which reference is made in

these verses. Then it is said: When you hand over the property to its owner you should do so before witnesses. Those of you who are likely to leave behind minor children should give no directions by way of testament which should operate unfairly against the children. Those who consume the substance of orphans unjustly only devour fire into their bellies and shall enter a blazing fire.

It is to be observed how many aspects of honesty and integrity God Almighty has set forth in these verses. A truly honest person is one who keeps in mind all these aspects. If this is not done with perfect intelligence his trustworthiness would cover many hidden dishonesties.' (The Philosophy of the teachings of Islam, pp. 53 – 55)

The next commandment is: 'And give full measure and weight with equity.' Here, the general directive is to carry out one's trade with honesty and without any form of deception. The Holy Prophet[saw] said that while selling a commodity any defect or flaw in the commodity should be made obvious so that the buyer is aware of it. Regarding this God states in the Qur'an: '...that is best and most commendable in the end.'(17:36) Indeed, honesty gains customers' trust and this in turns is profitable for the trader. God states that deception creates disorder. Alas that the greater the Qur'an unfolds these commandments, the worse Muslims are becoming as regards honesty. The condition of the Companions of the Holy Prophet[saw] was such that one of them had a horse to sell and he fixed its price at 500 Dirhams. A Companion liked the horse and said that 500 Dirhams was not the right price. The seller assumed the buyer would offer a lower amount. On the contrary, the buyer said it was such a fine horse that its price should be 2000 Dirhams. And thus they argued over the price! Such was the standard of Muslims who kept the company of the Holy Prophet[saw] and his Companions.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] related an incident in this regard. He went to Kashmir for sight-seeing as a young man and liked some of the exclusive carpets which are hand-woven in Kashmir. The carpet-maker crowed that his carpets were of very high quality. Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] had further sight-seeing to do, so he ordered a few carpets to take as gifts and left. On his return he found all the carpets a good few inches shorter in length and width than he had ordered. When Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[sra] drew the man's attention that he was charging the same amount of money for the carpets which were considerably smaller in size and reminded him of the size he had ordered and said that people around were witness to it, rather than get embarrassed, the man repetitively kept saying: 'I am a Muslim and you are saying I did this and that! Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih said it is now quite common to gloss over wrongdoing by asserting that one is a Muslim! He said a Pakistani Basmati rice exporter once told him that when packaging rice for export they mixed inferior grain of rice in the middle of a bag of superior grain rice through a large pipe so that only the good quality rice was visible. This is the reason the market is dominated by Indian rice, although Indian rice is not of as good quality as the Pakistan grain but due to the dishonesty Pakistani rice is not imported by countries. Maybe now some exporters from Pakistan, including some Ahmadis, export some rice, otherwise this dishonest practice had stopped export of Pakistani rice.

A *Hadith* relates that if the buyer and the seller speak the truth and disclose any defect in the merchandise God would bless the trade. If, they both indulge in falsehood and hide any defects or are deceitful, the trade will have no blessing. Another Hadith relates that when a trader measures to sell he should measure generously. The status of an honest trader can be found from the saying of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be on him) where he said that an honest and trustworthy trader is rightful to keep the company of the Prophets, the Truthful and the Martyrs.

May God enable those who associate themselves to the Holy Prophet[saw] to uphold the standards of honesty and trustworthiness in accordance with God's commandments and the Prophet's pronouncements. We should also self-reflect, there are many Ahmadi traders/business people. Are our practices in accordance with God's commandments? Are we honoring the rights of the vulnerable? Are we being fair in our businesses? Are we fulfilling the rights of every strata of society? Do we protect ourselves against all evil? *Ramadan* draws attention to virtues, we should also be drawn to these matters. May God make it so that we shun each evil that God has forbidden

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Angels Echoing the Kalimah[1] In the City of Angels

HISTORIC VISIT OF KHALIFA OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH[as] TO CALIFORNIA

Original Urdu Report by Abdul Majid Tahir

Translated by Professor Amtul Razzaq Carmicahel

The Head of the worldwide Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and Fifth Successor to the Promised Messiah[as], Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad[aba], undertook a historic trip to the West Coast of the United States for the first time. This was his third visit to the US. As part of his ten-day visit, His Holiness met with various federal, state and city officials, members of law enforcement, heads of consulates, scholars, professors and other dignitaries. On 11 th May, His Holiness delivered a keynote address at the Montage in Beverly Hills on Islam, terrorism and human rights. The purpose of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V's[aba] visit may be summed in the words of one of the National Vice Presidents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA as follows, "His Holiness is gracing America with his presence at a time when many young American Muslims struggle with their identity, and by his example of compassion and tolerance, His Holiness demonstrates that no conflict exists between being a Muslim and being an American."

4th May 2013

Upon his arrival at Los Angeles airport at 1.25 pm, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] was received by various dignitaries of the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* USA along with the Chief Immigration Supervisor of United Airlines, the Customer Services Manager and the Dignitary Protection Unit. The Honorable Lee Baca, Los Angeles County Sheriff, welcomed His Holiness and remarked that, "Our city is the best place in America for Muslims to live." The Sheriff has travelled widely in South Asia and His Holiness invited him to visit Rabwah, Pakistan on his next trip to the region. Rabwah is the Headquarters of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Pakistan. In welcoming His Holiness with a special City proclamation the Los Angeles City Councilman Dennis Zine, remarked, "Your Holiness, welcome to the city of angels—a fitting name on this historic day. Los Angeles is a melting pot for all religious and ethnic groups. We are honored to host you."

The arrival of His Holiness at the Baitul Hameed Mosque on Saturday afternoon was broadcast live nationwide, and to over 200 countries worldwide via the Internet. The Baitul Hameed Mosque was inaugurated in 1989 by Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad[rh], Fourth worldwide Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at*. It is a massive complex with praying facilities for more than a 1000 people, classrooms, offices, a library, a conference room, accommodation facilities including a guest house, along with a commercial size kitchen and a dining hall. The sprawling Mosque complex is also used by state and city officials as a temporary shelter during emergencies. It was after almost 19 years that a Khalifatul Masih had visited Los Angeles, and overwhelming feelings of happiness and joy besieged the crowd of thousands of Ahmadis who had gathered at the Mosque to welcome their beloved *Khalifah*. Many families travelled more than 2000 miles to partake in this historic event. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] reciprocated this warm welcome by waving affectionately at the gathered devotees before proceeding to his residence. Later, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad[aba] led the congregational afternoon prayers, which were followed by an inspection of the Mosque complex and a meeting with the president of the Los Angeles *Jama'at* (who is also one of the National Vice Presidents of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community). At the conclusion of these meetings, His Holiness led the evening prayers in the Baitul Hameed Mosque before retiring to his residence.

The Ahmadi Muslims, in large numbers, first arrived in Los Angeles in 1974, and have gradually grown into a robust community of 1500 devotees. A poignant reminder of God's countless blessings on Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* in the USA is the history of the *Jama'at's* humble beginnings in the 1920s, with the arrival of a revered companion of the Promised Messiah[as], Mufti Muhammad Sadiq Sahib[ra]" as the first missionary to the United States. Details of Mufti Sadiq's Sahib's[ra] awe-inspiring journey has been recorded in '*The Review of Religions*' as follows:

"When his ship docked in Philadelphia, the U.S. Government refused his entry into America. After two months' delay he was permitted to enter. His case was widely publicized and this exposure through media provided opportunities for preaching ... In the beginning numerous hurdles were overcome with Allah's help and his cheerfulness.... Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq[ra] was an exemplary *Da'ee ilallah* (preacher). He walked on the roads and streets of America, and men and women, attracted by his personality and dress, would stop and say: 'Look, Jesus Christ has come.' This comment would usually serve as the starting point of preaching. Mufti Sahib would explain to the audience that he was not Jesus[as] but an ordinary servant of the Promised Messiah[as]. Hadhrat Mufti Muhammad Sadiq[ra] successfully established centers of preaching in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago and conveyed the message of true Islam individually as well as collectively. He published articles in newspapers and reached people through advertisements and personal letters. He delivered lectures on Islam far and wide. He started the journal, *The Muslim Sunrise* in America and the first Ahmadiyya Mosque was constructed in Chicago during his blessed stay." [2]

Hadhrat Mirza Bashirud Din Mahmud Ahmad[ra], the second worldwide Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at,* referring to the Ahmadiyya Mission in America, once stated that it wouid ultimately triumph in the United States, and that one day the sound of the *Kalimah* (there is no God but Allah and Mohammad[saw] is His Messenger) would echo throughout the country.

5th May 2013

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] led the morning prayers at 5.15 am and thereafter spent the early half of the morning attending to his official duties. Thereafter, His Holiness spent the part of the morning attending to his official commitments; these commitments include responding to the official post about the activities of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community all over the world, inspecting reports, and issuing directives as weil as responding to the private letters requesting of prayers from the members of the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at.* From 10:30 am Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] granted a private audience (*Mulaqaat*) to Ahmadi families. During *Mulaqaat,* families seek His Holiness's advice and request him for prayers. His Holiness gave chocolates to visiting children and pens to young adults. Such blessed moments play a pivotal role in a family's spiritual development. With a short break for offering the afternoon prayers, the session of family *Mulaqaat* continued until 8:15pm when Hadhrat Khalifatuil Masih V[aba] led the evening prayers in congregation before retiring to his residence.

6th May 2013

After leading the morning prayers in Baitul Hameed Mosque at 5.15 am, Hadhrat Khalifatul MasihV[aba] attended to his official duties. At 10:30 am, His Holiness granted a private audience to 59 families from the United States of America, which was an opportunity for them to request His Holiness for guidance and prayers. After attending lunch at the residence of a local dignitary, His Holiness retired to his residence for a short break, thereafter leading the afternoon prayers at 5:30 pm at the Baitul Hameed Mosque. This evening, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] granted an audience to Ahmadi students studying in schools, colleges and universities across the USA. His Holiness advised that Ahmadi students must strive for attaining excellence and set their standards high by aiming for the Nobel Prize

During this meeting, students completing their Ph.Ds had the opportunity to present their research work to Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba]. One student was undertaking research on the technology that can be used to make outer surface implants used within the human body last longer without the risk of infection and dislocation. On hearing that the cost of such treatments range from $11,000 to $130,000, His Holiness commented that it was a very expensive cure. Another student presented his research project on honeybees. He is investigating the impact of different viruses on the survival of the honeybee. He explained that the use of agricultural chemicals has adversely affected the population of honeybees. His Holiness asked if it was true that if one honeybee dies then all the other bees help to take the body of the bee out of the hive. The researcher explained that this was true, and that the organizational scheme inside a honey bee hive is extremely structured. The researcher mentioned that if too much honey is taken out of the hive, the bee colonies tend to decline during the winter months. lt was also mentioned to His Holiness that signals from mobile phones and satellite television are adversely affecting the navigation skills of honey bees. The third Ph.D. student presented his research on the factors that make an organization successful and aspects that make organizations fail. After these presentations, His Holiness granted the students with an opportunity to ask questions and was pleased with the intellectual level of the questions asked. One student inquired how they should protect themselves from the negative influences of society, to which His Holiness advised that they should say *Istighfar* (a prayer to seek repentance) and *Lahaul-wala..* (a prayer to seek the ability to do good). Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] advised that they should adopt the good from society and discard vanity and evil. His Holiness stated that he had advised students in European countries to go into the field of research and seek opportunities for success within their respective fields. A student apprised His Holiness of the many challenges he was facing, at which Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] encouraged him to never become despondent and stay completely focused on his studies. His Holiness prayed for his success. Following the conclusion of this meeting with students, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] granted a private audience to 112 members from 32 Ahmadi families. Thereafter, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] led the evening prayers in congregation before retiring to his residence.

7th May 2013

After leading the early morning prayers at Baitul Hameed Mosque, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] attended to his official duties. Later, he granted a private audience to 192 members from 55 Ahmadi families and met with some of his officials to issue directives. Thereafter, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] led the afternoon prayers in congregation, following which His Holiness presided over a class with *Waqf-e-Nau* girls (youth who want to dedicate their lives wholly to the service of the Community). The class started at 5.40 pm with the recitation of the Holy Qur'an and its English translation. The young ladies gave various well-researched presentations and Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] was pleased with the standard of speeches and Urdu language. When due to technical issues, the girls were unable to present some information about places of interest in the West Coast of the US, His Holiness remarked in a light-hearted manner that perhaps he ought to go and see these places in person! Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] emphasized that those training to become doctors and teachers may be sent to developing countries in order to serve the Community. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] explained that these girls should be pious and should have true fear of God. They should offer the five obligatory daily prayers and regularly recite the Holy Qur'an. They must strive to attain a clear understanding of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an and endeavor to make them a part of their lives. His Holiness stressed the importance of *purdah* (covering) and modest Islamic dress for women. and espoused that *purdah* entailed that hair and the lower part of the chin are covered. If a woman is wearing make-up, she should cover her face. His Holiness recommended medicine as the profession of choice for women. Other professions suitable for women His Holiness advised are teaching and languages so that girls can undertake translation projects for the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at.* At the conclusion of the class, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] distributed bags and chocolates among the girls and returned to his office to meet with Ahmadi families from the US. He granted 106 members from 32 families a private audience. Some of these families had travelled thousands of miles to partake in this blessed meeting. Following this session of *Mulaqaat,* Hadhrat Khaiifatul Masih V[aba] led the evening prayers in congregation before retiring to his residence.

8th May 2013

This morning, His Holiness kindly agreed to an interview with a journalist from the Wall Street Journal, Tamara Audi [3]. During this interview, His Holiness explained that the purpose of his journey to the United States was to meet the members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and enhance their moral and spiritual education. By meeting with Ahmadi families from the US, and in particular their children, His Holiness is able to gauge specific areas that require special attention for the spiritual development of his Community. His Holiness candidly expressed his views on the integration of immigrants into society, the persecution of Ahmadis abroad, drone attacks and world peace. Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] made it clear that he did not wish to request anything from the US Government for himself or his Community, stating that he was merely a conveyor of peace. His Holiness expressed an interest in visiting local farms in keeping with his interest and training in agriculture. Following the interview, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] granted a private audience to many Ahmadi families from Phoenix, Boston, Las Vegas, New Orleans, Portland, Seattle, as well as Guatemala. After leading the midday prayers and a brief break Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] presided over a class with *Waqfe Nau* boys. His Holiness was pleased with the standard of speeches. His Holiness explained in response to a question that the Divine Revelation of the Promised Messiah[as], **"after 11"** had been fulfilled in favor of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in many ways. By way of example, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] espoused that the prophecy was fulfilled when the message of Ahmadiyyat was taken to US Capitol Hill with the Help and Blessings of Allah. The message of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been reported in many popular newspapers. His Holiness underscored that all this was unthinkable two years ago.

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] explained that the phrase *Kun Fayakoon'* [4] means that once God Almighty has decided that an event shall take place, then a process is set in motion to enable it to occur. His Holiness illustrated this phenomenon by alluding to the process of birth - i.e. that once God decides that a baby shall be born, then systems and processes are put into play for that baby to develop inside the womb for 9 months prior to delivery. His Holiness underscored the need for prayers seeking guidance for the people of Pakistan and protection for our Ahmadi brethren in the country. His Holiness reiterated that the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* needs the youth to train as missionaries, doctors, teachers and linguists. His Holiness advised that these youth must be regular in offering the five daily prayers and the recitation of the Holy Qur'an. He encouraged the boys to strive to acquire a deeper understanding of the teachings of the Holy Qur'an by reading its commentary regularly. His Holiness concluded by advising the youth to be exemplary in any capacity, striving to emulate the guidance furnished in the Holy Qur'an such that they may become a role model for others.

This class was followed by a meeting with a delegation from the Mormon Church, which was headed by the General Authority, Elder Craig Gordon. During this meeting, matters of mutual interest including the rendering of humanitarian services in Ghana and other African countries were discussed. His Holiness offered help, cooperation and technical assistance to Mormons for any of their altruistic projects in African countries. At the conclusion of this meeting, His Holiness thanked the delegates for their time who had travelled 1500 miles from the state of Utah for the meeting. More families were blessed with a private audience later that evening, some of which had travelled 3000 miles to seek a few moments of blessings, peace and prayers with their spiritual leader. At 8 pm, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] led the evening prayers in congregation at Baitul Hameed Mosque before retiring to his residence.

Edited by Hibba Turrauf and Ayesha Malik

Endnotes

1. There is no God but Allah and Mohammad[saw] is His Messenger (The Muslim Creed)
2. http://www.reviewofreligions.org/download/RR200702.pdf#page=18.
3. http://online.wsj.com/article/SB 10001424127887324059704578474981045877660 .html
4. When He decrees a thing, He says to it, 'Be!' and it is. [3:48]

REPORT OF "GLOBAL PEACE LUNCH" HELD IN HONOR OF HADHRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V[aba] AT "MONTAGE HOTEL IN BEVERLY HILLS, CA" (May 11, 2013)

(Original report authored by Respected Abdul Majid Tahir, Additional Wakil-ut-Tabshir UK, and published in Al Fazl, June 5, 2013, p. 3; English translation and rendering by Naveed Malik and Amjad Mahmood Khan)

On May 11, 2013, Huzoor Anwar[aba] arrived at Baitul Hameed Mosque at 5 AM and led Fajr prayers. Afterwards, Huzoor[aba] returned to his residence. In the morning, Huzoor[aba] reviewed and provided guidance on organizational correspondence, letters, and reports.

Reception at Montage Hotel

In June 2012, Huzoor[aba] toured east coast cities in the U.S. and visited U.S. Capitol Hill. After the U.S. Capitol Hill event, members of the U.S. Congress from the Los Angeles, California area approached Huzoor[aba] and invited him to visit Los Angeles.

So when Huzoor Anwar[aba] came to Los Angeles, the U.S. Jama'at hosted a daytime event at a famous Beverly Hills hotel called the Montage, and named the program, *"Global Peace Lunch: Reception in Honor of His Holiness Mirza Masroor Ahmad."* Several of those members of U.S. Congress who had invited Hudur[aba] to L.A. participated in the event, as well as other high-ranking officials.

Per the program, Huzoor Anwar[aba] departed his residence (near Baitul Hameed Mosque) at 10 AM in order to participate in the event. Two police cars escorted the convoy of cars: one in front of Huzoor's[aba] car, and the other following. Los Angeles is spread over a wide expanse of land. Baitul Hameed Mosque is located approximately 45 miles from this hotel. At 11:20 AM, Huzoor Anwar[aba] arrived at the hotel. For security purposes, police had closed the road leading up to the hotel.

Press Conference

First, Huzoor Anwar[aba] arrived at the conference room, where a press conference had been arranged. 14 representatives from print and electronic media covered the event. The press conference began at 11:25 AM.

One journalist remarked that even though the Community faces persecution in various countries, Huzoor[aba] continues to spread the message of religious peace and religious knowledge in every place, every forum: isn't Huzoor's[aba] life in danger?

In answer to this question, Huzoor Anwar[aba] said my task is to convey the message of religious knowledge and peace, which is the true message. I am not concerned with whether or not my life is safe. Allah *Ta'ala* has vouchsafed us with this work. For this reason, we cannot abandon it.

In Pakistan and various other countries, the lives of Ahmadis are in danger. Whether we spread the message or not, our lives are always in danger. These things make no difference. We are lighting this world with the true religion and true teachings.

While referencing the Promised Messiah[as]'s book, "Jesus in India," one Indonesian journalist posed the question that this book mentions that Jesus remained alive, travelled to Kashmir and then passed away there.

In answer to this question, Huzoor Anwar[aba] said according to our teachings, Jesus[as] was saved from the cross, and then in search of the lost tribes he travelled to Kashmir and spent his life there. Then, at the age of 120, he passed away in Kashmir. To present day, the grave is still there in Kashmir.

Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that not only do we say this but other scholars have affirmed this and from their research they have proved that Jesus travelled to Kashmir and then passed away there.

Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that with regard to Jesus's[as] second advent, our teachings are that according to the Holy Prophet's[saw] revelations the

person that will come will be the Messiah and the *Mahdi*.

The teachings of every religion are that somebody will come in the latter days. Every religion in waiting for somebody to come. So the one who is coming is the Messiah, the Mahdi and Krishna as well.

Our teaching is that according to the Holy Prophet's[saw] revelation numerous people will not come, but, that only one person will come, and he will be that very person who people from other religions are awaiting.

Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that others say that after the Holy Prophet[saw], the Imam Mahdi can come but he will not be a Prophet. We say that the *Imam Mahdi* will have the status of a prophet but he will be a *zilli* (shadow) and *ghair tashri'ee* (without a law) prophet. He will not come with a new law. This is the difference between us and others, and the biggest reason and issue that results in our being persecuted. However, despite this persecution carried out by others, we continue to grow, and continue to convey the message, and every year, tens of thousands are joining with us.

A newspaper correspondent asked a question about Ahmadis being deprived the right to vote in Pakistan, and what was the reason behind this.

In reply, Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that in 1974 a law was passed against us, stating that Ahmadis are not Muslims. This was the case, even though no government has the right to decide in the matter of anyone's religion. In 1977, [General-turned-President via military coup] Zia-ul Haq's government came into power. Martial law was established. In 1984, Zia's government passed extremely harsh laws against us, stating that we cannot call ourselves Muslims in any way whatsoever; nor can we outwardly present ourselves as Muslims; nor can we adhere to Islamic teachings; and they made many other laws.

Huzoor Anwar[aba] said it is your choice to consider us whatever you wish, but I also have the right to call myself what I think myself to be.

Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that now Ahmadis have had the right to vote taken from them: the voter registration form requires that every person make a statement denouncing the Founder of the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at*, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Sahib[as], and Ahmadis can never do such a thing. So they argue that since we have not given a statement denouncing the Founder of the Community, we are not Muslim; and we do not have the right to vote as Muslims.

Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that we are Muslims by the grace of Allah and we are citizens of Pakistan, and it's our right, in the capacity of citizens, to vote. The right to vote should be granted to everyone irrespective of one's faith. We will never vote in the capacity as [non-Muslims]. Until this law is repealed, we cannot exercise our right; or a list be made in which everyone is equal, and every citizen's name be listed irrespective of their faith, and with regard to voting, everyone be considered equal.

One journalist asked what Huzoor[aba]'s reaction was to terrorism.

Huzoor Anwar[aba] replied that he would receive his answer in the address that would take place in short order.

With regard to a question on persecution of the Community, Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that opposition has existed since the Community's inception. When Hadhrat Aqdas Masih-e-Maood[as], the Founder of the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at,* made the claim of being the Messiah and Mahdi, opposition to him began. Opponents registered cases against him in the courts, and lost no opportunity to cause him trouble.

The Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* is in its 125th year and it has always faced opposition.

The Founder of the *Jama'at* was alone in Qadian, Punjab. He made his claim and laid the foundation for the *Jama'at,* and in his own lifetime a half-million people of India joined the *Jama'at* and took *Bai'at* at his hand. Then, after his passing, *Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya* began, and opposition persisted continuously.

Then, in 1947, Pakistan was created. There also persecution continued. In 1974, we were declared 'non-Muslim.' In 1984, additional extreme laws were enacted against us, which remain in force today; and we continue to face severe persecution. However, despite all these things, we continue to grow regularly in Pakistan, and the *Jama'at's* numbers continue to increase.

Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that we are a law-abiding people. We do not respond in any way. We exercise patience, and resort to prayer. If not today, then tomorrow *Insha Allah* we shall win their hearts. By reacting [disruptively] it can never be that

hearts are won, and peace is established in society.

Another representative said that he is associated with NGOs that work with, and help refugees; he asked how they could help the Community.

In response to this question, Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that if they are aware of and helping asylum seekers that they should be aware of what is happening in Pakistan. Many Ahmadis have emigrated from Pakistan for various countries, and applied for asylum there. Among them, those refugees whose cases have been approved have moved to the U.S., Canada or various European countries; they may also be aware of this.

Numerous refugees are present in those countries now. If they wish to help, then help those who are still waiting for their cases to be heard.

Huzoor[aba] answered a question on the present conditions in Syria: Whatever is happening in Syria these days goes against Islamic teachings. The government and opposition are both acting wrongly, and both are acting un-Islamically.

Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that two years ago in a sermon he explained Islamic teachings in light of the situation and events in Syria, and also issued a warning that the way it is heading, extremely difficult times are coming. Then, this is exactly what happened, and the situation is so bad that it is reaching out of the realm of control.

One journalist asked why people call Ahmadis *kafirs* (disbelievers).

Huzoor Anwar[aba] addressed the journalist and asked, is it your belief that anyone can get up and call another a disbeliever? This is wholly against the teachings of Islam. They even levy the accusation against us that in our hearts we recite a different *kalima* (profession of faith). Huzoor Anwar[aba] mentioned an incident in the lifetime of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa]: in a battle, a companion killed a combatant who prior to his death recited the *Kalima Tayyiba* (*i.e.* 'there is none worthy of worship except Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah').

The Holy Prophet[saw] asked his companion why he killed the man after he had recited the *Kalima*. The companion answered that the man recited the *Kalima* out of fear of being killed, out of fear of death. Upon hearing this, the Holy Prophet's[saw] face became red (with anger). He asked, *"hal shaqaqta qalbahu"*, *i.e.*, "Did you rip out his heart from his chest and see it, to verify that he did not recite the *kalima* out of sincerity, and rather out of fear of death?"

Huzoor Anwar[aba] said that if the Holy Prophet[sa] did not know, then today how can these people know whether someone who claims one thing means something different in their hearts.

This press conference lasted until 11:40 AM. After the conference, when Huzoor[aba] left the room, California's Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom and Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca were waiting outside. They both received Huzoor[aba]. Sheriff Baca had also already come to the airport days prior to welcome Huzoor Anwar[aba].

Muse Room

Per the program, Huzoor Anwar[aba] was next taken to the Muse Room, where senior officials and other special guests were awaiting Huzoor Anwar[aba]. There is a boardroom in the Muse Room where the Vice President Biden had also conducted a meeting. Here, members of the U.S. Congress, senior officials from around California, the chief of police, members of council, State Senate and Assembly representatives, and L.A.'s mayoral candidate (in the election that was completed one week after the event) were present.

As soon as Huzoor Anwar[aba] entered the Muse Room, all of these officials stood up out of respect for Huzoor Anwar[aba]. First, Huzoor Anwar[aba] spoke with U.S. Congresswomen Karen Bass and Gloria McLeod. They had been waiting for Huzoor Anwar[aba] for quite some time.

Upon Huzoor Anwar[aba]'s asking, they said that they represent millions of Californians in the U.S. Congress. They then discussed numerous California issues with Huzoor[aba], including general social issues, agriculture and crime.

U.S. Congresswoman Gloria McLeod's Congressional district includes Baitul Hameed Masjid, as well as our Center. She told Huzoor Anwar[aba] that Ahmadis are doing good work in her district and she considers them her friends. She presented Huzoor Anwar[aba] with a Certificate of Recognition on behalf of her entire district.

After this, U.S. Congresswoman Judy Chu had the pleasure to

speak with Huzoor Anwar[aba]. She thanked Huzoor Anwar[aba] for coming to California. Rep. Chu is the first Chinese-American member of the U.S. Congress. She has a doctorate in humanities and is the chair of the Asian Caucus in the House. Last year, Rep. Chu also took part in Huzoor Anwar[aba]'s Capitol Hill address. In speaking with Huzoor Anwar[aba], she said she considered it her good fortune to once again meet with Huzoor Anwar[aba], and is eager to hear his address.

A resolution was presented to Huzoor Anwar[aba] on behalf of Rep. John Perez, Speaker of the California State Assembly, which wished Huzoor Anwar[aba] well and welcomed him to his visit to California.

U.S. Congressman Brad Sherman, one of the more important members of the U.S. Congress, and who participated in last year's Capitol Hill event, was meant to travel to Los Angeles to participate in this program. However, despite a great desire to do so, due to official business, and upon the urging of President Obama, he ended up remaining in Washington, D.C. Instead, he sent a personal letter with his Chief of Staff, Matt Domino, which sought Huzoor's[aba] pardon for not being able to attend and his discomfiture at not being able to participate.

Professor Jim Sonne, who teaches at Stanford Law School and is the director of a religious liberty clinic, and is considered par excellence in legal circles, welcomed Huzoor Anwar[aba] on his arrival.

Ms. Yolanda Parker, the most important member of the majority party, also thanked Huzoor Anwar[aba] and expressed happiness at his visit.

Four women members of the U.S. Congress were in attendance in the Muse Room: Karen Bass, Gloria McLeod, Judy Chu, and Julia Brownley. Someone in attendance mentioned that either all of this area's representatives were women, or that the majority were women. Huzoor Anwar[aba] took note of this and told guests that Islam is a great bearer of women's rights and the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community supports their success and is a promoter of women's rights.

Eric Garcetti, Los Angeles Council member (and now Mayor of Los Angeles), was in attendance with his father, Gill Garcetti (who is regarded as one of the most important political and party figures in California). They also welcomed Huzoor Anwar[aba].

An Angel in the City of Angels

"Los Angeles" is a Spanish word and means "City of Angels." Eric Garcetti, in complimenting Huzoor Anwar[aba], said, today an angel has come to the City of Angels. He further stated that Huzoor[aba]'s visited has increased the status and respect of Los Angeles. He asked for Huzoor[aba]'s prayers for success in the upcoming election, and said that Huzoor is an inspiring leader, and that the message be has brought to Los Angeles—namely, love for one's faith combined with peace—is regarded greatly and upheld by them.

In the Muse Room, some time prior to the conclusion of the program, Los Angeles Police Chief Charles Beck, dressed in his official uniform, presented himself in Huzoor[aba]'s favor, and welcomed and greeted him with peace.

Historic Event

At the end of the program, Huzoor Anwar[aba] went to the Montage Hotel's Marquessa Ball Room, where more than 350 people were waiting for him. As soon as he entered, everyone arose to welcome him.

Last year, after the Capitol Hill event in the nation's center of government, on May 11, 2013, another historic day for Ahmadiyyat dawned upon the western part of the country. In California's city of Los Angeles, people from 17 different countries and the nation's senior officials were drinking from the fountain of the Promised Messiah[as].

On the west coast the message of Ahmadiyyat was being conveyed, and such new paths to the revival of faith were being opened which just the day before Huzoor Anwer[aba] mentioned in his Friday sermon. Huzoor Anwer[aba] observed that the Hispanic population is waiting for our message, and the more he thought about it, it occurred in his heart that it is not far that a revolution of Ahmadiyyat will happen in America from this very region of [Southern California].

On May 11, 2013, on American soil, again new doors were opening for the victory of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, and it was entering a new era of triumphs. And Allah *Ta'ala's* decree is creating new fields for the victory of Ahmadiyyat.

At the event, members of Congress, other government officials, diplomatic and military officials, professors and NGO and think tank representatives participated. The breakdown was as follows: 13 diplomats and consulates were present; 20

law enforcement officials attended; 22 government office-holders were present; 14 representatives of media (print and electronic) were present; 37 university and college professors and educators were present; 26 representatives from various NGOs were present; 29 representatives of various religions were present. Then, doctors, lawyers, engineers, and people from diverse walks of life numbered more than 70.

Collectively, more than 250 senior officials, other officers, and guests participated in the program.

The program commenced with recitation of the Holy Qur'an, which was done by Respected Azhar Haneef Sahib, Missionary and *Naib Ameer* USA, who also read out the English translation afterwards.

Then, Respected Amjad Mahmood Khan Sahib, National Secretary *Umoor-e-Kharija* USA, introduced the event and the *Jama'at*. Then, various important people made their addresses.

California Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom's Address

First of all, California Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom, while giving his address and welcoming Huzoor Anwar[aba], said that prior to *Khilafat*, the time Huzoor[aba] spent in Ghana illustrates that he desires success for humanity, and is working towards that end. Lt. Gov. Newsom called California Controller John Chiang up to the stage and together they presented Huzoor Anwar[aba] a proclamation on behalf of California Governor Jerry Brown, in which Governor Brown wished Huzoor Anwar[aba] a pleasant stay while in California.

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Address

After this, L.A. County Police Chief Lee Baca praised in his address Huzoor Anwar[aba]'s tireless efforts towards peace and for humanity; and he also declared Hadhrat Aqdas Masih-e-Mau'ood[as] a great reformer and prince of peace.

Key to the City and Other Presentation

After Sheriff Baca's address, Los Angeles City Council Member Dennis Zine, along with Council President and mayoral candidate Eric Garcetti (who is now the current mayor of Los Angeles), presented Huzoor Anwar[aba] with the Golden Key to the city of Los Angeles. While presenting this key, Garcetti said that this Golden Key is reserved only for the most respected personalities. Prior to Huzoor Anwar[aba], this key has been presented to heads of state and winners of the Nobel prize. Garcetti said that in his 12-year presidency (of the Los Angeles City Council), this prize has been awarded just four times – a truly precious honor!

After this, Matt Dabaneh, Chief of Staff and representative for Congressman Sherman, presented Huzoor[aba] with an official copy of House Resolution 709, which was adopted in the 112th Session of Congress last June.

This Resolution was passed with the signatures of 21 members of Congress in the prior session, in which Huzoor[aba]'s efforts to establish peace were mentioned.

U.S. Congressional Leaders' Addresses

U.S. Congresswoman Karen Bass made brief remarks in which she praised Huzoor[aba]'s extraordinary efforts to heal the world, particular in the developing world, and correct misinformation about Islam.

Then, U.S. Congresswoman Judy Chu made brief remarks in which she said she joined today's program because Huzoor Anwar[aba] raises a voice against terrorism, extremism and war.

U.S. Congresswoman Julia Brownley then welcomed Huzoor[aba] and said, in part, "Your Holiness, today in the world of religions, you one of the greatest ecumenical leaders."

Huzoor[aba]'s Address

After this, Respected *Ameer Sahib* USA briefly introduced Huzoor Anwar[aba].

Then, at 1 PM, when Huzoor[aba] moved to the podium to give his address, the entire hall stood up, and guests clapped for an extended period of time.

Huzoor[aba] spoke for approximately 35 minutes on the subject of: "Islamic Solution to Achieve World Peace."

Later, after lunch, Huzoor[aba] met with many special guests and dignitaries (including U.S. Congressman Dana Rohrabacher and former California Governor Gray Davis), many of whom lined up and waited to greet Huzoor[aba].

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"ISLAMIC SOLUTION FOR WORLD PEACE" ADDRESS DELIVERED BY HADHRAT MIRZA MASROOR AHMAD, KHALIFATUL MASIH V[aba] ON MAY 11, 2013 AT MONTAGE BEVERLY HILLS, CA

All distinguished guests (السلام علیکم ورحمۃ اللہ وبرکاتہ *Peace and blessings of Allah be upon you all)*

First of all, I would like to thank all of our guests who have accepted our invitation to this event and who by coming have enlightened the occasion. I also thank all those honorable guests who have spoken and praised the Community and I also thank all those, who as a gesture of goodwill, have given gifts, especially the key to this city. Thank you for this. Your kind approach towards an Islamic religious organization is clearly demonstrated by your attendance and shows that you have a very tolerant attitude and a keen desire to learn about Islam.

With these few words, I would like to turn towards an issue of great importance and of which there is an urgent need to deliberate and talk about in today's world. What I wish to discuss is something that has caused Islamophobia in the Western and non-Muslim. There can be no doubt that this state of fear and anxiety has been fuelled by the acts of certain so-called Muslims or so-called Muslim groups.

However there is also no doubt, that the acts of terrorism or extremism they perpetrate have nothing whatsoever to do with the true teachings of Islam. The very meaning of 'Islam' is peace, security and giving a guarantee of protection against all forms of harm and evil. Indeed, the Holy Quran declares that this is the teaching that every single Prophet of God taught.

Islam requires Muslims to abide by its teachings and fundamental amongst them is that they must not only fulfill the rights owed to God Almighty, but just as importantly they must also fulfill the rights owed to God's Creation. The Quran has shined a bright light on the beauty of the teachings of *all* Prophets by making it clear that they *all* drew mankind's attention to fulfilling the rights owed both to God and to His Creation.

How then could it be possible, that on the one hand, God has praised the qualities of *all* religions for urging mankind to fulfill the rights of God and of man, yet on the other hand God could enjoin the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*), upon whom the Great Book was revealed, to not establish peace and security in the world? How could it be possible that they were instructed to cause destruction and to destroy the peace and security of the world? Certainly no wise person could ever accept this.

True justice and fairness requires that rather than judging Islam in a prejudiced manner or by making false assumptions based on hearsay, a person should study the religion and try to develop an understanding of its teachings before criticizing it and its Founder. An informed decision about any issue can only be made once a person has studied its teachings in depth and strived to learn the truth.

The truth or reality of any faith can only be learned from those who are practicing or striving to follow its true and authentic teachings. Today, it is the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, which claims to follow the original and true teachings of Islam and is spreading it.

Upon hearing this, you may question how Ahmadis can claim that they alone understand the true teachings of Islam, given that a large portion of Muslims and Islamic clergy do not even consider Ahmadis to be Muslims.

To answer this question, firstly and as I have already said, the Qur'an has clearly stated that Islam is a religion of peace that has nothing to do with terrorism or extremism. And secondly, in a grand prophecy made by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*), he said that as had happened with all previous religions, a time would come when the state of Muslims would become ruined and corrupted.

The Muslim scholars would spread false doctrines and ideologies and there would be great division and conflict within the Muslim world. Whilst the Holy Quran would remain preserved in its original state, false commentaries and interpretations would be made which would lead Muslims away from its true teachings.

According to the prophecy, when such a desperate state of affairs came to pass, God Almighty would send a person as the Promised Messiah and *Imam Mahdi* to rejuvenate Islam. He would clarify the correct meanings of the Qur'an and would inform the world of the true Islam practiced by the Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) and his rightly guided successors 1400 years before.

The Promised Messiah would guide the world towards living together in love, peace and harmony and would foster a spirit of mutual understanding and reconciliation. The Promised Messiah would do all of this in light of the shining example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*) and the true teachings of the Qur'an. Furthermore, the Promised Messiah would bring an end to all forms of religious warfare.

We, Ahmadi Muslims, believe that the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at*, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian[as], was the very person who was sent as the Promised Messiah and *Imam Mahdi* according to the prophecies of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]. We believe he came as a beacon of light to convey the true and luminous teachings of Islam to the entire world.

With these words of introduction, I shall now briefly present some examples of the beautiful and peaceful characteristics of Islam.

Before I give specific examples, I should mention that the person who followed the teachings of the Qur'an to the greatest extent possible was the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]. That is why one of his wives once said that his morals and his acts were a perfect mirror image and reflection of the teachings of the Qur'an.

Consequently, if a person studies the Qur'an then the life and character of the Holy Prophet[saw] will naturally become clear and apparent. In the limited time available it is not possible for me to cover all aspects of the Qur'an, in fact it is not possible for me to cover even one aspect of its teachings. Nonetheless, I shall try to briefly explain one part of Islamic teaching, which has sadly become very misunderstood in the modern world and thus has caused a great deal of fear to develop in the non-Muslim world.

I refer to the teachings of the Qur'an and the Holy Prophet[saw] in relation to establishing peace in the world.

The Qur'an was revealed by Allah to the Holy Prophet[saw] and from the very first verse of its very first chapter the Qur'an has given a message of peace. The first verse of the Qur'an reads:

"All praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the worlds."

This verse means that the God who Muslims worship, is the One God, who sustains and nourishes everything and everyone without any distinction. He fulfills all of the needs of His Creation. In other words, He is the God of the Christians, the God of the Jews, the God of the Hindus and indeed He even gives nourishment and provides to those who do not believe in His existence.

Whenever I reflect upon this particular point, I realize that I believe in that One God who is the Lord of *all* nations, *all* races and *all* religions, and so it becomes impossible that I could ever develop any hatred in my heart for any nation, any race or any religion. In this context I would like to say that my sympathies and my prayers

are with the victims of the recent Boston attack. We fully condemn that attack.

A Muslim has been commanded by God Almighty to pray five times a day and to recite the opening chapter of the Quran in each unit of prayer. And so, at the very least, a Muslim must repeat the prayer that His Lord is the '*Lord of all of the Worlds*' at least thirty-two times each and every day.

The entire world is God's Creation and He loves His Creation dearly. Thus the reason we praise the '*Lord of all the Worlds*' and repeat this prayer so many times each day is so that we realize and accept the beauty of *all* people and *all* nations because they are all part of God's Creation. When the beauty and merit of something is accepted, then it is impossible to bear hatred or malice towards it, rather love and compassion shine forth.

If this point is understood, then the question can not even arise in the heart of a true Muslim that he should bear enmity, ill-will or hatred towards any of God's Creation.

This is why the Holy Prophets[aw], who had the greatest insight and understanding of God's Word, used to recite the words "*All Praise belongs to Allah, Lord of all the Worlds*" not just in his obligatory prayers, but also in the countless voluntary prayers he used to offer. More than anyone else, his heart was consumed by love for all and was entirely free from any form of hatred or spite.

The Holy Prophet[saw] had love for all of God's Creation, but most particularly for mankind, because humans have been deemed to be the best of God's Creation. Human beings have been given wisdom to differentiate between right and wrong and so there is reward for goodness and punishment for wrongdoing. Due to the infinite love God instilled in the heart of the Holy Prophet[saw] for all people, he used to feel great anguish and despair for the state of mankind. He was constantly overwhelmed by a concern that due to wrongdoing a large number of people were at grave risk of incurring the Wrath of God and His Chastisement.

The Holy Prophet[saw] used to spend night upon night, beseeching his Lord and praying that those who had forgotten God became guided to the right path. He used to feel this burden with such intensity that Allah the Almighty has said in the Qur'an that the Holy Prophet would grieve himself to death due to his anguish for mankind. The Holy Prophet[saw] was held captive and enslaved in his heartfelt distress and desire to save the people of the world from destruction.

And so it is a cause of great injustice that many people today try to stain his blessed character by saying that, God forbid, he brought teachings of cruelty, oppression and injustice.

Today, when we the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* raise the slogan of '*Love for All, Hatred for None*' as a means to establish global peace, we do so directly in fulfillment of the teachings of the Holy Quran and the practice of the Holy Prophet[saw].

The Holy Prophet[saw] was so consumed by his desire to serve humanity and to fulfill the rights of mankind that throughout his life he stood ever ready for this cause. Even after becoming a Prophet of God, which was a huge responsibility and the greatest task imaginable, he said that if any person, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, called him at any time for the mission of serving humanity, then he would most certainly join them in their effort to serve mankind.

This was *his* example, whereby irrespective of religion, if a person was in any kind of need or came from a deprived segment of society, he deemed it essential to come forward to help and assist him. Despite his great status as Islam's Founder and a Prophet of God, he deemed it of utmost importance to work towards this pious objective with non-Muslims.

The question may well arise in some people's minds that if the Holy Prophet[saw] was filled with so much love for humanity, then why is his name associated with warfare? Why did he take part in some wars and why did he send some armies into battle?

To answer this question, we must assess whether an entirely pacifistic attitude, whereby war in all circumstances is wrong, is a correct doctrine? Or alternatively whether in extreme circumstances fighting may be permitted? And, if in certain circumstances it is permissible, then what are the required conditions and to what extent is war allowed? What does Islam teach us about this?

As I explained earlier, when a Muslim praises the '*Lord of all the Worlds*', the beauty of God's Creation comes before him and he is compelled to praise and be attracted to it. When this beauty is acknowledged, one cannot harbor any ill will or malice towards God's Creation.

However there will always be some people who do not act upon this teaching and who are determined to spread disorder in society and the wider world. Islam has given very clear and detailed guidance about how to reform such people so that global peace and harmony can be maintained. Allah the Almighty has said in the Quran that had not Allah repelled some men by others the earth would indeed be full of mischief. But Allah is the Lord of Grace to all Peoples. (*Chapter 2 Verse 252*)

If we ponder the meaning of this, we see that peace is undoubtedly the best state of affairs and so Allah has naturally instilled its attraction inside the human mind. However sometimes man goes against his natural tendencies and inclinations. His greed, envy, selfish interests and hatred overpower him and incite him to such an extent that he no longer has any concern for the rights of others.

As a result disorder develops in society, in a country and in the wider world. Such people move far away from peace. It becomes their objective to suppress and violate the freedoms that society hold dear. They attack basic human rights such as freedom of conscience and freedom of thought by using force and severity. Indeed, such people also target religious freedom and seek to suppress it.

It was when such subjugating circumstances arose, that Allah granted permission to the early Muslims to respond to force with force. This permission was granted only as a means to stop disorder, to stop cruelty and establish peace and harmony.

Allah has said in the Quran that He bestows His Grace and Blessings on *all* of the Worlds. He does not favor any nation or region. He does not desire peace for just a limited few, rather He wants to see the entire world filled with peace, harmony and compassion. In the sight of Allah, all of His Creation is equal and the same.

If God has enabled someone to become wealthy then that person does not have the right to deprive a poor person of his rights. Similarly, if any nation or country becomes powerful and wealthy it does not have the right to usurp the rights of weaker and poorer countries. God Almighty has clearly said that such cruelties only create division and conflict. In the eyes of God, peace is a great and paramount objective, and so to establish it, if you occasionally have to sacrifice a smaller ideal then there is no harm, as it is for the greater good of mankind.

When permission for defensive war was first given in Islam, it was given with the reason that whilst Muslims truly desired peace, the disbelievers wished to destroy the peace. If permission to fight back had not been granted to the Muslims at that point then *all* religions would have been placed in grave danger. Allah the Almighty says in the Holy Qur'an:

> *"Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged and Allah, indeed, has power to help them.*
> *Those who have been driven out from their homes unjustly only because they said, 'Our Lord is Allah.' – And if Allah did not repel some people by means of others, there would surely have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft commemorated. And Allah will surely help one who helps Him. Allah is, indeed, Powerful, Mighty." (Chapter 22, Verse 40-41)*

Thus, it is quite clear that Islam has made every effort to establish peace and every effort to protect all other religions. Even where defensive war was permitted to the Muslims, the Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) gave extremely strict rules of engagement to the Muslim armies which they were compelled to abide by.

The Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) taught that during wars only those people who were directly engaged in the war could be fought. He gave strict instructions that no innocent person was ever to be attacked. No woman, child or elderly person was ever to be attacked. He taught that no religious leader or priest could be attacked in his place of worship. The Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) further taught that no person could be forced or compelled to convert to Islam. He taught that when Muslims were forced to fight for the cause of peace they must not create fear or terror amongst the members of the public, nor should they be treated in a harsh or severe manner. He taught that prisoners of war should be treated with even greater care and attention than a person would pay to himself. He taught that buildings should not be targeted or destroyed and that trees should not be felled.

Thus even where conditions existed where war was justified, the Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) gave countless guidelines and instructions to his followers which were essential to follow. I have only mentioned very few.

The Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him)* said very clearly that whosoever acted against these rules of engagement would not be fighting in accordance to the commands of Allah to establish peace, but rather would be fighting for their own personal interests or gain.

Those who criticize the Holy Prophet of Islam (*peace and blessings be upon him*) in today's world should reflect upon whether these instructions are being followed in any of the wars taking place today? Is it not the case that today horrific weapons are being used which are causing innocent people to be killed indiscriminately?

Yet, the Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) prohibited any form of collateral damage, to the extent that once during a war, a companion accidently killed a child and this caused great displeasure to the Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) who severely rebuked him for this act.

Another incident shows just how much respect the Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) had for all of mankind. Once a funeral procession passed by and as a mark of respect he immediately stood up. Upon seeing this, a companion commented in surprise that:

"*This is the funeral procession of a Jewish person.*"

Hearing this, the Holy Prophet Muhammad (*peace and blessings be upon him*) said:

"*Was he not a human? Respect for all humans is obligatory*".

These are the characteristics and qualities which develop mutual respect in society and help develop peace.

Today's world is ever increasing in its criticism of Islam and its Founder, despite the fact that Islam's teachings and the Holy Prophet's every act were filled with love for humanity and a desire to establish peace in the world. Sadly, today's world does not see or understand what is really happening today.

As I have already said, the evil acts conducted by extremists claiming to be Muslims, have nothing to do with the real teachings of Islam. If there is oppression in Muslim countries or the rights of the public are being usurped then that too is completely contrary to the teachings of Islam. The Holy Prophet (*peace and blessings be upon him*) said that such cruelties were based only on vested interests and certainly were not for the sake of God.

Bearing all of this in mind, the urgent need of the time is that instead of thinking ill or holding misconceptions about Islam, all those who desire peace should join together and discuss how cruel and unjust elements can be stopped.

Defaming or unjustly attacking Islam is not the right way. Leaving aside certain Muslim countries and groups, there are also non-Muslims who are conducting acts through which innocent people, women and children are losing their lives on the basis of 'establishing peace'.

The direction the world is moving in suggests that the dark shadow of war is being cast over a very large part of the globe. If war breaks out then countless innocent women, children and elderly people will all die. The destruction will be greater than was witnessed in the previous two World Wars and I say this knowing full well that during the Second World War tens of millions of people lost their lives. The world's population is now far greater and there has also been a vast increase in both the number of weapons of mass destruction and the countries that have developed a thirst for war. Under these circumstances destruction will be manifold.

In light of all of this, it is imperative that the world and particularly the major powers reflect upon what efforts are required to save the world from a horrific destruction.

Fear of Islam or attempts to defame it will not achieve anything or lead to peace and reconciliation. Instead, the key to peace is to stop cruelty and oppression wherever it occurs with justice and equality. Only when this principle is followed will global peace develop. This will only happen when the people of the world come to recognize their Creator.

It is my ardent hope and prayer that the entire world urgently comes to understand the needs of the time before it is too late.

At the end I would like to once again thank all of our guests who have taken the time and effort to come and attend this event.

May Allah bless you all. Thank you very much.

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HADITH

Hadhrat Anas[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "I have impressed upon you repeatedly the importance of brushing your teeth."

(Bukhari ktabul jumu'a babussawak yaumul jumu'a)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "If I did not apprehend that it would be burdensome on my followers or the people I would prescribe the brushing of teeth before every Prayer."

(Bukhari ktabul jumu'a babussawak yaumul jumu'a)

Hadhrat Mughirah bin Sha'bah[ra] relates: "I was with the Messenger[saw] of Allah one night during a journey, when he asked me: 'Do you have water with you?' I replied, 'Yes.' Then he dismounted from his she-camel and walked away and disappeared into the darkness of the night. When he returned I poured out for him water from a vessel and he washed his face. He was wearing a woolen long coat and could not extract his arms from his sleeves. So he pulled them from lower side of the coat and brought them out from below it and then washed his forearms. Then he passed his wet hands over his head. I stretched out my hand to take off his socks, but he said: 'Leave them.' I put them on after I had washed my feet; and he passed his wet hands over them.' "

(Bukhari ktabullibas bab labisa jubbatussauf fil ghazw)

65th JALSA SALANA, USA

Held at Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex Harrisburg On June 28-30, 2013

Report by: Habibullah S. Bajwa

Jalsa Site Preparation

Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar Sahib, *Ameer Jama'at* Ahmadiyya USA, appointed Wasim Haider *Afsar Jalsa Salana*, Mirza Naseer Ehsan Ahmad *Afsar Jasa Gah* and Bilal Rana *Afsar Khidmat-e-Khalq* well in advance. They set up teams of *Naib Afsran, Nazimeen* and *Muavineen* for the preparation of *Jalsa* and discharging the responsibilities of various *Nizamats*. The designated area of Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex was covered with colorful painting, banners and flags for beautifying the landscape, reception, transportation, accommodation, security and *Langar Khana* areas. Quotations of the Promised Messiah's[as] weredisplayed on beautiful banners.

Jalsa Salana Program

A program committee comprising of Dr. Zaheer Bajwa, Maulana Azhar Haneef and Mirza Naseer Ehsan Ahmad under the chairmanship of *Ameer* USA, deliberated and chalked out a program for the *Jalsa*. The topics and speakers were carefully selected and approved. *Ameer Sahib* also approved the program for the *Lajna Jalsa* proceedings. A beautiful brochure with the names of speakers and topics of the speeches was printed.

Registration:

All members of the *Jama'at* were required to register on line for *Jalsa* using the Internet. Identity cards with a barcode and magnetic strip with appropriate information was set up to be scanned. It helped with the security check. Registration booths were set up on both the men and ladies sides.

Jalsa Gah

Like previous years similar *Jalsa* arrangements were made at Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex. Hotels required for accommodating guests were at a convenience location from the *Jalsa* site. The *Jalsa* facility, with its prime location and central air conditioning, offered two big halls and a few conference rooms. The venue for the main *Jalsa Gah*, both for men and women, was in the big halls situated a walking distance apart. Arrangements for direct TV transmission of *Jalsa* proceedings for the combined session were in place via MTA.

Physical Arrangements

The physical arrangements for *Jalsa Gah* started much earlier. Colored curtains were set up and offices, stalls were built for smooth running of the *Jalsa* event. For the convenience offices for Registration, Information, Reception Accommodation, Media & Press and *Hazri Nigrani* were at *Jalsa* Site. Similarly desks for Transportation and Humanity First and stalls and offices for Exhibition, Books, Langar *Khana, Rishta Nata, MKA, Khidmate Khalq, Tehrike Jadid*, First Aid/ Homeopathy were inside the main *Jalsa Gah*. MTA set up its studio at the back of the stage. MTA interview booth was on right hand side on the stage. The background screen displayed 65th *Jalsa Salana* USA 2013. Verse 33:22 of the Holy Qur'an written in Arabic on right had side and its English version on left hand side of the large screen.

Examining Jalsa Site

On June 27, 2013 evening Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar *Ameer Jama'at* USA visited Jalsa Site. He met with *Afsaran, Naib Afsaran, Nazimeen* and *Muavaneen Jalsa* to examine the final preparation. His visit encouraged and motivated volunteers. In his brief remarks he asked volunteers to pray for the success of *Jalsa* and pray for all who offered their services for the guests of the Promised Messiah[as]. The *Ameer* led the silent *Dua* and proceeded for dinner.

Flag Hoisting Ceremony:

Following tradition *Ameer Sahib* performed Flag Hoisting ceremony on Friday June 28, 2013 at 1:45 PM and led silent prayer.

Jumu'ah and Asr Prayers

Lunch was served before and after *Jumu'ah* and *Asr* prayers. Naseem Mahdi Sahib Missionary In-Charge and *Naib Ameer* delivered Friday Sermon and led *Jumu'ah* and *Asr* Prayers.

After *Surah Fatiha* he recited following verses from three different Chapters 3:104, 15:46-48 and 49:11. He discussed brotherhood in Islam and explained the early period of Islam and how the Holy Prophet[saw] developed brotherhood between the *Ansar* and *Muhajreen* and their exemplary sacrifices in this regard. Emphasizing the significance of the *Jalsa* he quoted the Promised Messiah[as] in his own words who asked members to participate in *Jalsa* regularly to enhance their spirituality and knowledge. The Promised Messiah[as] expected that a large group of nations will be participating in these *Jalsas*. By the grace of Allah it is happening now and throughout the globe our *Jasa* are held in which people from various nationalities participate. The speaker urged members to spend their time in remembrance of Allah, sending *Durood* to the Prophet[saw] and saying *Salam* to each other during the whole *Jalsa*. He also asked members for attending all programs and continue praying for the success of *Jalsa*.

Exhibition

Nazim Exhibition, Col. Fazal Ahmad started setting up the exhibition much earlier along with his family. It was set up beautifully in such a way that attracted the attention of all. Large sized photos of the companions of the Promised Messiah[as] were displayed along with some members of the *Jama'at* with a brief introduction. Col. Fazal Sahib and his team helped the visitors and guests during their visit.

Announcement Booth

An announcement booth was set up at the stage. Dr. Khalid Ata and his team announced the schedules of important events from time to time.

Accommodation

The Jama'at reserved hotels close to the *Jalsa* site. Many Ahmadis stayed in hotels. *Nizamat* Accommodation also arranged rooms for non-Ahmadi guests.

Book Stall

Muhammad Ahmad Nasir with his team set up the bookstall and made the necessary arrangements. He reports that: The total sale of books at the *Jalsa Salana* was around 12,700.00 dollars. This year it was decided that we will not sell multi volume and reference books during *Jalsa*. These will be sold online only. We only took a sample set of each reference books. Laptops were available both on the men and ladies sides where people placed online orders. Lots of people are now placing orders online at our web -site, http://amibookstore.us during the year. And as shipping is free people are not waiting for *Jalsa* to buy books. Hence our *Jalsa* sales are not that critical anymore.

Special Events

The auxiliaries of the *Jama'at* held their meetings. The Ahmadiyya Medical Association, The Lawyer Association, the Scientists Association and the Engineers and Architecture Association held their professional meetings to discuss their achievements and future planning. Humanity First USA held its meeting at a lunch on Saturday. On the same evening a reception for guests was arranged by National *Tabligh* Department.

Khidmat-e-Khalq

Umair Ahmed *Nazim* Press sent this report:

Jalsa Salana USA 2013 took place in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania's Farm Show Complex center from June 28-30, 2013. The organizers were facing volunteer shortages, as fewer people were committing to come to the *Jalsa,* since many had taken time off to visit beloved Hazoor in Los Angeles, California in May.

Many weeks of volunteer recruitment, conference calls, planning documents and the review of prior year's red book items were put to the test when the *Jalsa* started and guests of the Promised Messiah[as] started coming in. As always *Khidmat-e-Khalq,* this year headed by first year Sadr MKA, Bilal Rana Sahib, performed admirably.

Outside, braving the hot weather were the Parking & Traffic team along with Perimeter Security. Inside, Interior Security efficiently handled guest security and check-in. The sight of young children at badge scanning stations always brings smiles. Guests made good use of luggage check-in facilities provided by *Khidmat-e-Khalq.*

Any operation of this scale with more than 100 volunteers, requires a command center. The *Daftar* team like every year was prepared. They managed volunteer check-in, timely refreshments and accommodation. This year, the *Daftar* team also sent daily e-mails with pertinent information to all volunteers. Another new feature, managed by *Khidmat-e-Khalq,* was the Press Desk, whose job was to report on the Jalsa proceedings and provide fresh updates on www.mkausa.org and Twitter.

When the *Jalsa Gah* inspection team came by *Khidmat-e-Khalq Daftar,* they were impressed with the

performance and said it rated 95%. *Alhamdulillah!* This is especially commendable, considering that on Friday, the first, and sometimes the most chaotic day of *Jalsa, Naib Afsar Khidmat-e-Khalq* Safeer Bhatti fell ill and his duties had to be assumed by other volunteers. By the Grace of Allah, *Jalsa* 2013 concluded with good attendance. The hard work of volunteers was much appreciated.

Waqfe Nau Program

By the mercy and benevolence of *Allah Subanwa Talah* the National *Waqfe Nau* department has organized a *Waqfe Nau* presentation at the event of USA *Jalsa Salana* every year, *Alhamdulillah.*

This year by the Grace of Allah we had three programs, two on Friday after *Jalsa* program and one on Saturday during the lunch break. We had a *Waqefa`at* program on the *Lajna* side for girls age 11 and above, which was attended by 80 plus *Waqafa`at e Nau,* and approximately 110 mothers and others in the audience. *Sadr Sahiba Lajna* USA presided and it was co-chaired by Mrs Mirza Maghfoor Ahmad Sahib.

On the men's side the *Waqfe Nau* program for boys was held, presided by Maulana Naseem Mahdi Sahib, *Naib Ameer* and Missionary In-charge USA and co-chaired by Hafiz Samiullah Chaudhary Sahib, the National Secretary *Waqfea Nau*-USA. It was attended by 140 *Waqfe Nau* boys and more than 150 fathers and others in the audience. The main theme of the presentation on both sides was "The Directives of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih[aba] to *Waqafeen*" with reference to the Friday sermon delivered on Jan 18th 2013. The presenters worked very diligently in rehearsing among their respective group to format a presentation which would justify the subject in the limited time. In addition all the presenters of various other items were well prepared and practiced to minimize short falls.

The program concluded with recognition of those *Waqafeen* who completed the first recitation of the Holy Qur'an for the first time, by presenting them with plaques. Also as an annual gift all *Waqafeen* were presented a 4G USB drive. These drives were uploaded with the *Waqfe Nau* syllabus in both Urdu & English, Khalifaul Masih IV's[aba] Urdu & English sermons pertaining to *Waqfe Nau,* Urdu Learning books An`*Asan Qaeda,* and a few other important files

The Career Orientation and re-dedication program

The program was conducted on Saturday afternoon was organized. Hafiz Samiullah Chaudhary Sahib, the National Secretary *Waqfe Nau*-USA chaired it. It was attended by boys and girls above the age of 14. The objective was to re-emphasize the importance of rededication and to honor those who have rededicated as per the instructions of Hazoor[aba].

It is very humbly requested to all *Jama'at* members to keep the *Waqafeen* in your auspicious prayers that may Allah enable them to strive on the path of *Waqf.* And may He empower them to be dedicated souls and enable them to fulfill the desires of our beloved Hazoor[aba]. *Ameen.*

Dinner for Guests

On the evening of June 29, 2013 a *Tablighi* dinner was arranged by the National *Tabligh* Department USA. The National Secretary *Tabligh* welcomed the guests and invited some guests to speak for a few minutes. The following guests expressed their views:

Major Daljit Singh Pannu, Sikh Society of Florida Rabbi Barry Silver Spring. Boca Raton Reform Jewish Temple George Halcovage, Dauphin County Commissioner.

Attendance of Guests was 175 to 200.

Musha'ira

After dinner and *Isha* Prayer the 6th Annual *Musha'ira* of MAALA (Mid-Atlantic Association for Literature Appreciation) with the collaboration of *Jalsa* organizers was held on Saturday in the main *Jasa Gah.* 10 well-known poets from North America participated and presented their poems. Ahmad Mubarik conducted the program and Sadiq Bjawa was *Sadr* of the *Musha'ira.* 220 gents and more than100 ladies attended. A separate arrangement for ladies was set up by a large partition.

Tahajjud and *Salat* Arrangements

Congregational *Salatul Tahajjud* on Saturday and Sunday and daily Payers were offered at the *Jalsa Gah.* On Saturday Hafiz Mubarak Kokoyi of Chicago led *Tahajjud* and Imam Noman Rana of Zion led *Fajr* and delivered *Darsul Qura'an.* On Sunday Zainul-Abideen of Baltimore led *Tahajjud* and *Imam* Salman Tariq of St. Louis led *Fajr* and delivered *Darse-Hadith.* The attendance at *Tahajjud* and *Fajr* time was around 200 (men and women) on both days.

Opening Session (Friday afternoon-June 28, 2013)

The session was presided over by Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar, *Ameer Jama'at* Ahmadiyya USA The session started with recitation from the Holy Qur'an by Hafiz Samiullah Chaudhry who recited 35:16-24 followed by its English translation by Tariq Sharif Sahib. Mansoor Rafiq recited a poem of the Promised Messiah[as] in his melodious voice. The English translation was read out by Junaid Latif Sahib.

Ameer Sahib welcomed all guests and referred to the teaching of the Promised Messiah[as] who invited all members to attend *Jalsa Salana* to increase their spirituality. The Promised Messiah[as] foretold that by attending *Jalsa* they would receive bounties and blessings of Allah in abundance. *Ameer Sahib* read a letter of Khalifatul-Masih V[aba] in which he prayed for the success and spiritual blessings of the *Jalsa.* Hazoor quoted writings of the Promised Messiah[as] regarding our *Jalsa Salana* and developing brotherhood and mutual ties. He reminded the members to involve themselves in the remembrance of Allah and to listen in scholarly speeches attentively. He also referred to the Promised Messiah[as] who asked members to establish *Taqwa,* serve humanity and pray five prayers regularly. Hazoor[aba] urged members to listen to his sermons regularly. *Ameer Sahib* expressed the desire of Hazoor[aba] who asked the US *Jama'at* to communicate with the Spanish Community for *Tabligh.* After that *Ameer Sahib* led the silent prayer.

Ameer Sahib said that he wanted to cover two important points but one had been covered in Hazoor's letter. How to move *Tabligh* forward is an important point he wanted to mention. Bringing people together as a community is important. Involving in community service and, helping humanity and fellow being is important as well, he added. He reminded that the last time Khalifatul Masih V[aba] had assigned the US *Jama'at* to do *Tabligh* in Spanish community. We have to take this task seriously and fulfill our responsibility, he further added.

After that he invited Mr. Uthman Osvaldo Villegas a Spanish new convert to express his views. Mr. Uthman spoke in Spanish with its English translation. He said that by accepting Islam he established a relationship with Allah for which he had prayed for a long time. He expressed his surprise to see people of different backgrounds. He requested members to pray for him as all are children of Allah. We should follow the teaching of the Promised Messiah[as], help humanity and spread his message, he concluded.

First speaker of the session was Maulana Shamshad Ahmad Nasir. The topic of his Speech was: Congregational Salat-Our Duty and Distinction.

He recited a part of verse 48:30 of the Holy Qur'an and said that in *Salat* glory of Allah is expressed. We seek His mercy and beg forgiveness. He quoted the writings of the Promised Messiah[as] regarding prayer (*Majmooa Ishteharat* Vol.3 P.48). He recited prayers of Hadhrat Ibrahim[as] and other prophets who advised to pray and observe Prayers. The speaker referred to the sayings of the Holy Prophet[saw] in which he expressed the importance of praying in congregation. He mentioned that once Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I[ra], during his stay in Medina, missed his *Zuhar* Prayer. He was upset and prayed continuously for forgiveness. The speaker quoted Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] who said that prayers in congregation would not let him misguided. He said that the Holy Prophet[saw] did not allow even a blind man to pray at home. He referred to the 2004 visit of Khalifatul Masih V[aba] to Burkina Faso. When Hazoor heard about an accident in which Ahmadis were involved he started *Salat.* After *Salat* it was found that all individuals involved in the accident were saved by the Grace of Allah. He said that following Islamic tradition and praying *Salat* in congregation was such a characteristic of Ahmadis that even non-Muslim and non-Ahmadi recognized it. At the end the speaker referred to the writings of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] regarding *Adhan* and *Salat.* Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] urged the members of the community to pray in congregation as the solution to bring the Kingdom of Allah in the world.

Second speaker of the session was Falahuddin Shams. His topic was: Verily I am With You, O Masroor!'-Divine Support of Khilafat and Jama'at.

The speaker referred the incident of Cave Thaur where Allah exhibited His help. The Holy Prophet[saw] comforted his companion by saying that "Allah is with us" and Allah miraculously saved them from the enemy. Allah always helped the Holy Prophet[saw] and his companions throughout his life and during *Khilafate Rashda.*

Similarly, Allah revealed to the Promised Messiah[as] and provided His help during difficult periods. The help of Allah continued with all Khalifatul Masih and members of the *Jama'at*. The Promised Messiah[as] stated that he heard every night the voice of Allah saying "I am with you". The speaker mentioned incidents where help of Allah favored members of the *Jama'at*. He quoted another revelation of the Promised Messiah[as] in which Allah said "I will disgrace him who intends to insult you". The speaker mentioned incidents during the long history of *Jama'at* that how Allah helped and bestowed His blessing upon the *Jama'at*. The speaker referred to the recent tour of Khalifatul Masih V[aba] when Allah honored him and showered His blessing during his tour.

The third speaker of the session was Waseem Syed and his topic was: I shall give you a Large Party of Islam-the Spread of Ahmadiyyat Worldwide.

The speaker recited verses 21:45 and 61:10 of the Holy Qur'an meaning "He may cause it to prevail over all religions". The speaker said that the Holy Prophet[saw] foretold that it will happen in the latter days at the time of the Promised Messiah[as]. Allah helped and provided resources like MTA to spread the message of Islam throughout the globe. He said that at the time of the hundredth century of Ahmadiyyat on May 28, 2008 we pledged with Khalifatul Masih V[aba] to spread the message of Islam everywhere. The speaker said that Allah revealed, "I shall give you a large party of Islam" and He fulfilled His promise. From a small town of Qadian the message reached in more than 200 countries of the world. The Promised Messiah[as] rectified the misconception of Islamic ideology. Concluding his speech the speaker referred to the book of Promised Messiah[as] Fateh Islam in which the Promised Messiah[as] said that the triumph of Islam is destined and there would be nobody to stop it.

Before concluding the session Dr. Khalid Ata made announcements and reminded the members to inform in writing about their relatives who passed away during last year.

Morning Session (Saturday-June 29, 2013) Presided over by Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar, Ameer, Jama'at Ahmadiyya USA

The session started with the recitation of the Holy Qura'n by Salman Tariq who recited verses 23:1-12 of the Holy Qur'an translated in English by Basir Rodney. Khalid Minhas recited a poem of the Promised Messiah[as] in Urdu and English translation rendered by Jason Elsea.

The first speaker of the session was Maulana Rizwan Hameed Khan. The topic of his speech was: Chastity and Modesty-Not just for Women.

Before inviting the speaker *Ameer Sahib* elaborated the significance of the topic.

Maulana Rizwan Khan referring to his topic said that it is normally considered that chastity is for woman only. Actually it is equally important for both man and woman. Delicacy is specific for ladies whereas men are created physically strong. If men imitate women in dresses and appearance their masculinity diminishes. The Holy Prophets[saw] prohibited men to wear silk and gold as they lead towards femininity. Basically, the spirit of veiling is important and it applies to both sexes. The Holy Qur'an commands both men and women to lower their gaze whenever they come across. Respect and avoiding intermixing would help to develop chastity. The Holy Prophet[saw] said that when man and woman are alone the third is Satan. We should adopt the same formula for ourselves that we think important for others. If we like that no one should be intimate with our wife, daughter or sister we must apply it to ourselves. The speaker quoted to a speech of Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] and from the writings of the Promised Messiah[as] on this subject. He concluded that by adopting chastity we can develop relation with our Creator and His creation.

Bilal Rana was the second speaker. The topic of his speech was: Avoiding the Drug Culture-Essential Islamic Guidance.

He recited verse 2:52 of the Holy Qur'an when the followers of Moses[as] started worshiping calf in his absence. He said that anything that diverts our attention is an idol. Drugs are exactly like idols. Today, drugs are more effective than a few years back. Similarly the role of pornography and culture is significantly important in diverting out attention. Hadhrat Moses[as] provided spirituality but his people were attracted towards idolism. The Promised Messiah[as] asked to refrain from

all that create toxicity and affect the brain as thousands involved in such habits lost their lives. Taking care in early age and nourishing children with proper guidance helps in avoiding drug culture, the speaker said. Similarly trusting Allah and never become disappointed helps in avoiding all types of adversely influencing culture. The speaker referred tolate Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad *Naib Ameer* USA who always cited his own example that how Islam changed his life from drugs to spirituality. In concluding remarks the speaker said that it is obligatory to treat young adult as young adults and not like children and avoid propagating weakness. He referred to the exemplary model of the Holy Prophet[saw] that how he reformed people by touching their hearts.

Jalal Latif was the third speaker and his topic was: Raising a Righteous Generation - A Father's Role.

The speaker quoted the example of Hadhrat Ibrahim[as] and his prayers mentioned in the Holy Qur'an. He said that he is addressing specially children who are recently married or going to be married. At the birth of a child *Adhan* and *Aqamat* are conveyed to the child indicating early training. He recited verses 31:18-20 of the Holy Qur'an where Hadhrat Luqman[as] advised his child for prayer and adopting good habits. Training children in the beginning is very important. Both parents are responsible for the training of children. Make your wife your friend, the speaker advised and pray for your children. As the Promise Messiah[as] said that he prayed for his children in every prayer and advised us to practice it. The speaker quoted his own example. Without prayers spirituality can not be achieved and Allah answers our prayers if asked with sincerely. We have to trust Him. He referred to Hazoor[aba] sermons in which he emphasized on praying regularly and in congregation. The parents have to set their own example of praying for their children. Bringing up children as your best friend is beneficial in good training, the speaker concluded.

At that point *Ameer Sahib* reminded members to emphasize on prayers and attend all programs. He announced that the concluding address of Hazoor[aba] from Germany *Jalsa Salana* will directly be relayed in our concluding session on Sunday. He asked members to arrive at the *Jasa Gah* before 10:00 AM for the session and receive blessing from Hazoor's[aba] address.

Maulana Azhar Haneef was the fourth speaker. His topic was: The Age of Innocence-Companions who Found God in Youth.

The speaker referred to the demise of Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad[ra] at the time of our *Jalsa Salana* of 1963 and quoted Ch. Muhammad Zafrulla Khan[ra] who asked about the standard of our spirituality at that time. He said that his question applies to us in this age as well. "Does our morality and spirituality increase with our increasing number and where do we stand now", was the question. If not, how to improve is the more serious question. Youth exhibited a great role in the early age of Islam. Hadhrat Ali[ra] was only 10 years old but supported Islam not by words but by practice. He urged youngsters to follow his practice, to never turn back from their assigned task in the whole of their life. The speaker said that at the Judgment-Day God-fearing youth would be among the seven people who will be blessed. He said that Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] at the age of 19 and Hadhrat Ali[ra] at the age of 10 pledged and fulfilled it throughout their lives. He asked that each youth sitting in the *Jalsa* should promise and become the true followers of Islam and do their best to follow its teachings and find God. A relation should be developed with the living God. Thus all drug related challenges of Satan will be covered. He quoted incidents of youth at the time of the Holy Prophet[saw] and how they developed righteousness and sacrificed for Islam. He mentioned some Afro-American Ahmadi youth who served for *Jama'at.*

Ameer Sahib appreciated the speaker on his wonderful presentation.

Educational and Talent Awards Ceremony

Muhammad Ali Mumtaz was asked to come for announcing the awards. He said that the Educational award distribution was initiated by Hadhrat Khalifatu Masih III[rh] who awarded gold medals to Ahmadi students achieving I, II and III positions in their boards/ universities. Then Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] initiated Ahmadiyya Talent Awards in USA. This year 7 students achieved these awards which were presented by *Ameer Sahib* USA.

Atfal Welcome Packages

Atfal welcome packages were distributed to the children who recently turned 7 and entered *Majlis*

Atfalul-Ahmadiyya. 14 children received such packages from *Ameer Sahib.*

Alme Inami: Majlis Ansarullah USA

On the basis of overall activity of a *Majlis Alme-Inami* is awarded to the best *Majlis.* This year *Alme-Inami* was awarded to *Majlis* Willingboro.

Majlis Atfalul Ahmadiyya

The *Alme Inami* was awarded to *Atfalul-Ahmadiyya* Central Jersey.

Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya USA

The *Alme Inami* was awarded to *Majlis Khuddamul Ahmadiyya* Philadelphia.

Afternoon Session (Saturday-June 29, 2013) Presided by Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar, *Ameer, Jama'at* USA

Session stared with the recitation from the Holy Qura'n by Zafar Sarwar who recited 6:5-10 of the Holy Qur'an and English translation read by Bashir Asad. Kaleem Bhatti recited a poem of the Promised Messiah[as] and Omer Shaheed read its English translation.

Maulana Naseem Mahdi was the first speaker of the session. His topic was: Muhammad[saw], the Messenger of Peace.

He recited verse 33:22 of the Holy Qur'an and said that his presentation would be from the Holy Qur'an and the teachings of the Holy Prophet[saw]. He said the meaning of *Assalamo Alaikum* is wishing peace and one attribute of Allah is also "*Assalam*" the one who provides peace. The religion has been used both positively and negatively. The teaching of the Holy Prophet[saw] is the teaching of Qur'an. The text of the Holy Qur'an being exactly the same as it was revealed is also accepted by non-believers. The life of the Holy Prophet[saw] is the teaching of Islam. Ahmadiyya Muslim Community intends to spread this teaching peacefully. We believe in all Prophets who have been sent to all nations and there is no distinction between them. No religion has a monopoly on salvation. It is God's decision to allocate Paradise to anyone (verse 2:66 of the Holy Qur'an). He mentioned the incident of early Muslims migrating to Ethiopia due to persecution and their dialogue with the King. He also mentioned the migration of the Holy Prophet[saw] to Medina and his battles in self-defense. As a ruler of Medina he established peace and a declaration of security provided to all who believed in him or not. Saint Catherine Monastery was granted amnesty in 628 AD. Pondering upon the facts one has to believe that the Holy Prophet[saw] was the messenger of peace, he concluded.

After that *Ameer Sahib* introduced **Amjad Mahmood Khan** and asked him to moderate the session in inviting guests. Mr. Khan on behalf of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community welcomed the guests and exhibited a video about Ahmadiyyat.

After that he invited the first guest speaker, Congressman **Charles W. Dent** of Pennsylvania. He appreciated the *Jama'at* activities in developing peace and justice. He said that the *Jama'at* policy of tolerance is very important. He said he is well aware of the persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan and visited Pakistan.

Linda Thompson Mayer of Harrisburg was the second speaker. She greeted the audience and welcomed them in arranging the *Jalsa* at Harrisburg. She said it was her 3rd visit to such a gathering. She quoted last year's visit of Khalifatul Masih V[aba] that Islam provides freedom and security and prohibits violence.

Eric Treene from the Department and Justice and Civil Rights Division was the 3rd speaker. He appreciated that the AMC celebrates the 4th July with the nation. He said that due to religious freedom and liberty millions arrived in USA. All countries should respect it. He said that it a sign of harmony that people of all faiths celebrate 4th of July and the declaration of freedom.

Amjad Khan addressing the audience said that the AMC established the **Humanitarian Award** in 2011. This year it is awarded to 2 persons.

The first honoree was Congressman **Frank Wolf of Virginia**. The award was presented to him in his office. He expressed his views in a video displayed at that time. He thanked for the honor and appreciated the efforts of AMC.

The second honoree was **Dr. Katrina Lantos Swett** who serves as Chair of US Commission on International Religious Freedom. She thanked for the award, appreciated efforts of AMC for serving humanity and commitment for developing peace.

The next guest speaker was **Asad Ahmad** Historian and Professor at Berkley University. He said that in the early days of Islam collaboration of Muslims and followers of other religions was common and that is missing now.

The next speaker was **Lincoln Steed**, Associate Director of Religious Liberty and Public Affairs 7th Advent Church Silver Spring. He greeted and said that he visited Indonesia at a time when Muslims and Christian exhibited violence against each other. As the same God is being called, religious freedom is needed for living together peacefully, he added.

Kecia Ali Professor of Islamic Studies Boston University was the last guest speaker of the session. She narrated an incident when she with her husband wanted to attend *Jumua'h* Prayer at a mosque in Guyana but she was not allowed to enter the mosque. A mosque that allowed her to offer prayer was an Ahmadiyya mosque in Guyana. That was her first introduction to AMC. She said that for mutual understanding differences of opinion should be disregarded and all types of sectarian differences should be avoided.

Ameer Sahib thanked the guests and guest speakers and invited them for dinner and led the silent prayer.

Sunday June 30, 2013 Morning Session: Presided by: Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar, *Ameer Jama'at* USA

The session started with recitation of the Holy Qur'an by **Hafiz Mubarak Kakoi** who recited verses 33:22-25 of the Holy Qur'an and **Ahmad Nooruddin** offered its English translation. An Urdu poem of the Promised Messiah[as] was recited by **Bilal Raja** and the English translation was done by **Mujahid Azim**.

Before inviting the speaker *Ameer Sahib* urged members to remember all workers, volunteers and missionaries in their prayers. He said we believe that Allah will accept our prayers. We have to increase our *Tabligh* efforts as well. Hazoor will be assigning more missionaries for US, he added.

Faheem Younus was the first speaker. His topic was: Sunnah-the Best Model Leading to Divine Mercy and Love.

The speaker said that as each and every society has an inside desire to be loved and love is a driving force, it revolves around his topic as well. He narrated incidents from the early period of Islam and the love exhibited by Muslims for their faith who tolerated hardship and bitter opposition. He narrated two stories-a story of the love of a companion of the Holy Prophet[saw] Hadhrat Musaib[as] who sacrificed for the love of the Prophet[saw] and faith, and a story of young Pakistani who crashed miserably in the love of worldly pursuit. He said that we have to follow our Prophet[saw] and his companions to maintain our integrity even during adverse circumstances. We should never accept luxuries at the expense of losing integrity. Eliminating useless desires and becoming honest and trustworthy and practicing the example of the Holy Prophet[saw] is important for everyone. The speaker referred to a saying of the Musleh Mau'ood[ra] in which he advised each Ahmadi to become living example of Muh-ammad[saw]. He concluded by suggesting an action item. He said that in the coming month of *Ramadan* we should determine to follow the practice of the Holy Prophet[saw] in our daily life and be consistent in our action.

Maulana Naseem Mahdi was the second speaker and his topic was: A Common spirit-two Eras of Companions.

The speaker recited verses 62:1-5 of the Holy Qur'an and said that four duties of the Holy Prophet[saw] have been discussed. In the next verse the Prophet's[saw] second coming has been mentioned. When the Holy Prophet[saw] recited these verses a companion asked about his second advent. The Holy Prophet[saw] said that a Promised One would come in the latter days from Persian descendants at a time when the faith will disappear from the earth, he would bring it back. The speaker said that in verse 61:8 a prophecy of Jesus[as] has been mentioned. It is the second coming of Ahmad who would be asked to come towards Islam. The Holy Prophet[saw] could not be that person as he was not asked to come towards Islam. The prophecy is fulfilled in the person of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] who was a true lover and servant of the Holy Prophet[saw]. The time of his advent was also fixed as the 14th century. The speaker elaborated it from different verses of the Holy Qur'an. By believing the companions saw Allah with their own eyes and they never hesitated even to sacrifice their lives. He mentioned how the two eras have been exhibited- an era of the companions of the Holy Prophet[saw] and the second era of the Promised Messiah[as]. The spirit of sacrifice for the faith and believ-

ing in Allah as exhibited by the companions of the Holy Prophet[saw] was also expected to be exhibited by the companions of the Promised Messiah[as] and it happened and continues happening by the followers of the Promised Messiah[as].

At that point the speaker stopped due to the live address of Hazoor[aba] from Germany.

Concluding Address of Hazoor[aba] from Germany

Hazoor[aba] recited verse 21:108 of the Holy Qur'an and said that the mercy of the Holy Prophet[saw] encompassed each and every one throughout the world. From his mercy not only his companions were blessed but his opponents had share. The enemies of the Prophet [saw] also appreciated his quality of mercy. The Holy Qur'an is a complete code of life that covers all areas of secular and spiritual life. It is *Shariah* to be practiced. The Holy Prophet[saw] foretold that the people would be deserted from the teaching and practice of Qur'an. Even their scholars would not be practicing the teaching as required. At such a time the Muslims would be confused and cry for mercy. The Holy Prophet[saw] gave the great tiding of a Promised Reformer destined for the latter days. With his advent the lost glory of Islam would be restored and he would distribute the wealth of blessed teachings, he added. That glad tiding was fulfilled at the time of the Promised Messiah[as] and his *Khulafa*. Hazoor[aba] said that throughout the history of Ahmadiyyat Allah exhibited His mercy on Ahmadis during bitter opposition, trials and turbulences and no opposition could stop the progress of the *Jama'at*. He mentioned the progress of the *Jama'at* from the time of Khalifatul Masih I[ra] till today. Hazoor[aba] said that MTA played a great role in spreading the message of Islam and spiritual training. He mentioned the role of media and how it provided vast coverage to *Jama'at* activities and during his recent visits of America, Canada and Germany. Hazoor[aba] also mentioned some bounties and blessings of Allah and how many people accepted Ahmadiyyat through visions. Hazoor[aba] said that it is now our responsibility to pray for our Holy Prophet[saw] whose mercy provided such bounties for us. We have to prove by our action that the blessings of Allah never stopped so that from the mercy of the Holy Prophet[saw] the whole world can be benefitted, Hazoor[aba] added.

Hazoor[aba] led the silent prayer.

Ameer Sahib recognized and appreciated all members of USA *Jama'at* who supported the *Jalsa* event and spent considerable time and energy in the smooth running of *Jalsa* activities. He prayed for the safe return of all participants of *Jalsa*.

Ameer Sahib announced that overall attendance of *Jalsa* was **6,467.**.

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SUPPORT HUMANITY FIRST WITH MONETARY DONATIONS

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HADITH

Hadhrat Jabir[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "Keep your utensils covered and your water -skins tied, and doors closed and extinguish the lamp, because, Satan does not untie the mouth of your water-skin, nor open a door, nor uncover a utensil. If someone amongst you does not have anything to cover a utensil well, he should cover it by placing (a piece of) wood across it. Do so in the name of Allah', i.e., recite *bismillah*, because, the mouse may set the house on fire over its inhabitants."

(Muslim kitabul ashriba babul amr bi t'aghtitul ana')

Hadhrat Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "Refrain from sitting in the streets. They said: 'O Messenger[saw] of Allah! We cannot help but sit in the streets as these are (our places) where we have conversation.' The Messenger[saw] of Allah said: 'If you insist on sitting there then you must fulfill the obligations due to the pathway.' They asked: O Messenger[saw] of Allah, 'What is due to the street?' He said: 'Restraining of looks, refraining from harming others, reciprocation of greetings, enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil.' "

(Bukhari kitabul istaidhan bab ya-ayyu halladhina amanu la- tad-khulubuyu-tan)

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PAY ZAKAT

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OPENING ADDRESS BY DR. AHSANULLAH ZAFAR, AMEER JAMA'AT USA AT JALSA SALANA USA 2013

Transcribed by: Mansura B. Minhas

After *Tawuuz,* and *Tasmiya,* Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar, *Ameer Jama'at* USA said:

"I would add my welcome to everyone today who has joined in this most sacred event based on the teachings of *Masih-e-Mau'ood*[as] where he enjoined that all of those who are his followers should come once a year to Qadian and gather to listen to him at that time – which was a fortunate occurrence - and we don't have that but also to hear others speak about the matters related to spirituality, to the right faith and to the praise of God and commemoration of *Rasulallah*[saw] and other similar matters. And he foretold that there would be enormous blessings bestowed upon those who come and join for this.

So we are gathered in that tradition and in the hope and the prayer that we will benefit from the prayers of the Promised Messiah[as] and from the promises given to him by Allah Almighty in very clear terms that He will do so. *Ameen.*

In the beginning, I want to start with a letter that I have received as a message from *Khalifatul Masih V*[aba] and I will read it out. It's in English.

Message of Hazoor[aba] for the Jalsa Salana USA 2013

"Dear members of Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* USA,

Assalamo Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahe Wa Barakatohu.

'I am very pleased that you are holding your annual *Jalsa Salana* on these days. It is my prayer may Allah bless your *Jama'at* with great success and may all the participants benefit greatly from the immense spiritual blessings of this blessed gathering. All the members who are attending the *Jalsa* should realize that this is not any ordinary convention, but that it is a very profound spiritual event. The Promised Messiah[as] has stated "the major aim of this gathering is that sincere members of the *Jama'at* should be able to derive religious benefits and at the same time they should acquire more knowledge and advance in their relationship with Allah. One advantage is that by meeting various friends, the circle of brotherhood will broaden and it will strengthen their mutual ties". And this is a quote from *Asmani Faisla.*

Therefore, it is very important that you treat the *Jalsa* as a very respectful, religious occasion and you should not indulge in idle, irrelevant or irreverent talk, but you should concentrate on the remembrance of Allah, on prayer and on *Istighfar*. You should try to listen attentively to the speeches of the scholars of *Jama'at* and thereby increase your knowledge and understanding of the wonderful teachings of Islam and Ahmadiyyat.

As Ahmadi Muslims, you are expected to set the highest example of goodness, honesty, integrity and most importantly piety and *Taqwa,* that is righteousness. This is a community which has been established by Allah Himself, for the revival of true Islam and for the service of humanity. In this regard, the Promised Messiah[as] has emphasized "the purpose of their joining the movement and establishing with me a relationship like that of a disciple, is that they should achieve a high degree of piety and righteousness. No wrongdoing or mischief should ever come near them. They should offer five daily prayers regularly and with congregation and should not lie or hurt anyone by their tongues. They should not be guilty of any vice and should not let even a thought of mischief, wrongdoing or transgression pass through their minds. They should shun every type of sin, offence, undesirable speech and action, as well as all egoistic passions and unruly behavior. They should become pure hearted, harmless and meek servants of Allah Almighty and no poisonous germ could flourish in their being". Similarly Promised Messiah[as] has taught us "Utter no word of mischief, spread no evil,

bear the rebukes with patience. Do not confront anyone, even if someone confronts you and deal with him with kindness and goodness. Demonstrate a good example of sweetness of conversation, abide by all commandments with a true heart so that Allah be pleased with you and even the enemy may recognize the change in you after *Bai'at.* Give true evidence, all those who join this movement should establish themselves on truthfulness with full heart, full endeavor and the entirety of life". This is from *Zikr-e-Habib.*

I also remind you of your responsibilities in *Tabligh* which are fundamental to the life of every Ahmadi. It is essential that you endeavor to bring people to the true religion by active preaching. To be a successful preacher, you need to attain moral excellence and particularly seek Allah's help through prayers. Each Ahmadi who is associated with the Promised Messiah[as] needs to understand these responsibilities so that he can be a means to achieve the objective for which the Promised Messiah[as] came.

I also advise you to remain attached and loyal to the blessed institution of *Khilafat.* You should listen regularly to my sermons and encourage all fellow members of the *Jama'at* –the young ones and the elders – to do so as well. If you cannot listen to my sermons live, then you should listen to the recording, but it is essential that every member of the *Jama'at* receives the latest message of exhortations of *Khalifatul Masih.*

Today the task of revival of Islam can only be performed by adhering to the system of *Khilafat.* Therefore, you should always endeavor to uphold this noble institution and ensure that your future generations always remain within the blessed guidance and protection of *Khilafate Ahmadiyya.* May Allah enable us to do so. As the participants of the Jalsa, you will also benefit from the prayers of the Promised Messiah[as] who has prayed especially for those people who attend the *Jalsa Salana.* The Promised Messiah[as] has prayed as follows:

"I pray to Allah that He may be with all those who are coming to attend the *Jalsa* and that He may grant them great rewards and that He may show them Mercy and His Grace. O Allah! O You who are the greatest Benefactor, the Benevolent, The Merciful, and the Remover of hardships, do listen to all the prayers of mine and grant us victory over our opponents with great signs. For you have the power, to whatever you will. *Ameen.*" (*Ishtihar* 1891)

Hadhrat Sahib concludes 'May these heartfelt prayers of the Promised Messiah[as] be with you all. May Allah bless your *Jalsa Salana* with every success and may all of you be infused with a new spirit of faith and *Taqwa,* to enable you to go forth and serve the *Jama'at* and cause of Islam and humanity with renewed spiritual fervor and energy. May Allah bless you all'.

At this time, I'm going to request that we all join together in silent prayers that Allah make the prayers *Khalifatul Masih* has made for us and the Promised Messiah[as] has made for us. May Allah make it so and may we be deserving and moving in the right direction with that.

HADITH

Hadhrat Abi Usaid Al-Ansari[ra] relates that he heard the Messenger[saw] of Allah make a remark when he was coming out of the mosque, and men and women mingled in the road. The Messenger[saw] of Allah said to the women, "You should delay (in the mosque) as you are not to walk in the middle of the road; you are to keep to the sides of the road." So, thereafter, a women would walk so close to the wall that her garments would stick to the wall from rubbing against it.

(Abu Dawud kitabul adab bab fi mashi annisa' fittariq)

Hadhrat Jabir[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "When a Muslim plants a tree, then whatever is eaten from it is charity on his part and whatever is stolen is charity on his part and whatever is cut from it, but is regarded as a charity on his part."

(Muslim bab fadalul gharisu wazzar'a, Bukhari)

Hadhrat Anas[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "When a Muslim plants a tree or sows a field and men or beasts or birds eat from it, all of it is charity on his part."

(Tirmidhi abwabul ahkam bab fi fadalul gharisu)

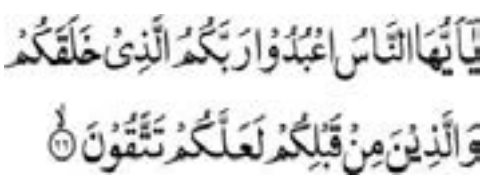
Hadhrat Abu Musa[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Alla¯h said: "When anyone passes through our mosque or market while carrying a spear, he should hold the tip of it, lest it injure one of the Muslims."

(Abu Dawud kitabul jihad bab finnabl yadkhilu fil masjid)

CONGREGATIONAL SALAT IS THE DUTY AND DISTINCTION OF EVERY AHMADI

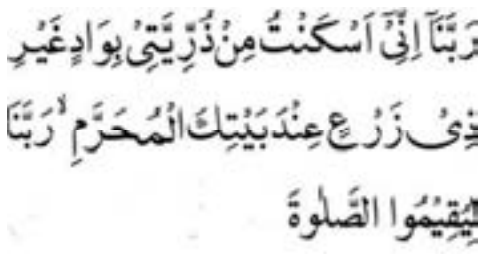
Imam Shamshad A. Nasir

Salat or the worship of God is the fundamental principle of all religions. The forms may vary, but the purpose is always the same. According to the Holy Qur'an, every messenger came in this world to teach the importance of worship, the purpose of which is explained in the very first commandment given in the Qur'an, in *Al-Baqarah*, Chapter 2, verse 22, where God says:



O mankind, worship your Lord Who created you and those who were before you, that you may become righteous;

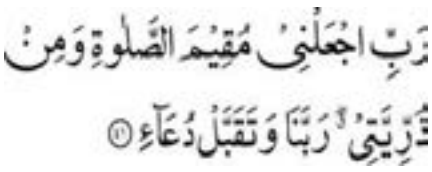
Hadhrat Ibrahim[as], while settling his son Hadhrat Ismail[as] in the barren valley of Mecca, states the reason for doing so in *Surah Ibrahim,* verse 38:



Our Lord, I have settled some of my children in an uncultivable valley near Thy Sacred House — our Lord — that they may observe Prayer.

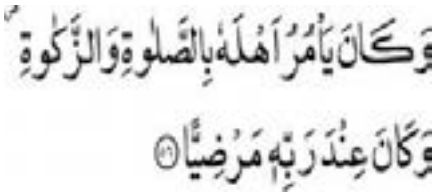
Then at another occasion, Hadhrat Ibrahim[as] prays for himself and his progeny in these words recorded in verse 41 of *Surah Ibrahim*:

My Lord, make me and my progeny observe Prayer.



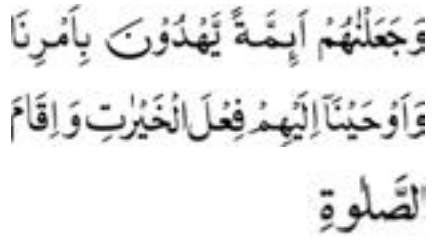
And then about Hadhrat Ismail[as], the Holy Qur'an testifies in these words:

He used to enjoin Prayer



and almsgiving on his people, and he was well pleasing to his Lord. (19:56)

About Hadhrat Lot, Hadhrat Ishaq, Hadhrat Yaqub and other prophets and their progeny it is said in the Holy Qur'an:

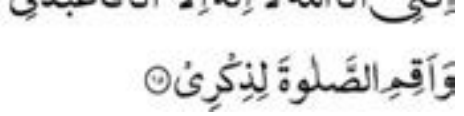


And We made them leaders who guided *people* by Our command, and We sent revelation to them *enjoining* the doing of good works, and the observance of Prayer. (21:74)

Hadhrat Luqman[as] admonished his son:

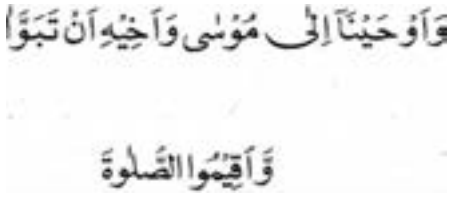
O my dear son! observe Prayer. (31:18)

Allah *Ta'ala* said to Hadhrat Musa[as]:



Verily, I am Allah; there is no God beside Me. So serve Me, and observe Prayer for My remembrance. (20:15)

Similarly, Allah commanded Hadhrat Musa[as], Hadhrat Harun[as] and Bani Israel:
And We spoke to Moses and his brother, *saying*, "… and observe Prayer." (10:88)



Allah *Ta'ala* has described his promise to Bani Israel in these words:
[5:13] . . . I am with you. If you observe Prayer. (5:13)

The Holy Qur'an states about Hadhrat Zakariya[as]:

وَقَالَ
اللّٰهُ اِنِّیْ مَعَكُمْ ۙ لَئِنْ اَقَمْتُمُ الصَّلٰوةَ

And the angels called to him as he stood praying in the chamber... (3:40)

And in the Holy Qur'an it is stated that Hadhrat Isa[as] said:

فَنَادَتْهُ الْمَلٰٓئِكَةُ وَهُوَ قَآئِمٌ يُّصَلِّیْ فِی
الْمِحْرَابِ

"And He has made me blessed wherever I may be, and has enjoined upon me Prayer. . ." (19:32)

And about Hadhrat Muhammad[saw] Allah says:

وَّجَعَلَنِیْ مُبٰرَكًا اَیْنَ مَا كُنْتُ ۪
وَاَوْصٰنِیْ بِالصَّلٰوةِ

And enjoin Prayer on thy people, and be constant therein. (20:133)

And the commandment for Muslims and believers is that: (20:1

وَاْمُرْ اَهْلَكَ بِالصَّلٰوةِ وَاصْطَبِرْ عَلَیْهَا ؕ

Say to My servants who have believed, that they should observe Prayer. . .(14:32)

Now let us draw our attention to the benefits of congregational *Salat*, and how this act becomes the identifying feature of the members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

قُلْ لِّعِبَادِیَ الَّذِیْنَ اٰمَنُوْا یُقِیْمُوا الصَّلٰوةَ

The Promised Messiah[as] says:

"...You shall be known for offering the five daily prayers and for having good morals."

(*Majmu'ah Ishtiharat*, vol. 3, p.48)

He further said: "The mission for which God has appointed me is to remove the separation that has come between man and his Creator, and re-establish the relationship of love and sincerity between him and his Lord."

(*Lecture Lahore, Ruhani Khaza'in*, vol. 20, p.180)

The Holy Prophet[saw] used to immediately offer Prayers when he faced any trouble or trial. It is my personal experience, and the experience of all truthful people . . . that there is nothing greater than Prayer to lead one to God.

(*Malfoozat*, vol. 9, p.110)

In the Holy Qur'an the term "SALAT" (Prayer) is mentioned 100 times, including variant forms from the same root. Such repetition in the Qur'an is not without reason. In many places, the word "IQAMA" and "YAQIMUN" (to establish / to observe) are also used. The meanings of these words are explained by Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] in *Tafseer–e-Kabeer* as follows:

"*AQAMUS SALAT*" means:

(1) to perform Prayers regularly (*Aqrab*), that is, at the prescribed time without any omission;
(2) to perform Prayers in accordance with all the prescribed conditions (*Mufradat*) i.e., after ablution, doing correct postures – standing, bowing, prostrating, sitting, etc.,
(3) to not perform Prayer lazily;
(4) to motivate others to offer Prayers, and;
(5) to pray in congregation and ask others to do the same.

On the importance of congregational prayer, Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] observed that Muslims in general have forgotten the importance of offering Prayer in congregation, and this is one major cause of their disunity and differences. Allah the Exalted has put lots of blessings in this act of worship. But unfortunately, the Muslims have ignored all of them.

In the Holy Qur'an, wherever Prayer is commanded, it is understood to mean Prayer in congregation. Just to offer the Prayer is mentioned nowhere. It shows that to offer Prayer in congregation is an important principle of the religion of Islam.

Looking at the instructions of the Holy Qur'an, it can clearly be concluded that Prayer is offered only when it is in congregation. The only exception would be an unimaginable circumstance. Therefore, anyone who does not offer his Prayer in congregation without a valid reason, even if he offers it at home, his Prayer will not be counted.

(*Tafseer-e-Kabeer*, vol. 1, pp.104-106)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] in his 1972 *Jalsa* speech said:

"Remember, therefore, that the first meaning of "*AQAMUS SALAT*" is to offer congregational Prayer. That is the reason that wherever "*AQAMUS SALAT*" is mentioned, it is always in plural form. It is a collective commandment to all Muslims. If it was not required, then there was no need to build mosques, and no need to say these words in the Azan: "Come to the Prayer! Come to success!"

The practice of the Holy Prophet[saw], and his advice to his Companions[ra] was to offer the obligatory Prayers five times daily in congregation. He was so emphatic on this point that he did not allow even a blind person to offer the Prayer at home if he could hear the call to prayer, even though he had to come to the mosque stumbling along on his way.

(*Jalsa Salana Speeches before Khilafat: "Reality of Prayer*" 1972, p.201)

Again, the 4th Khalifa[rh] said:

Offering Prayers in congregation and to populate mosques comes under the directive of "*AQAMATUS SALAT.*" And it needs to be emphasized to the maximum.

It is proven by the sayings of the Holy Prophet[saw] that, without any legally acceptable excuse, there is no reason for the believing men to be absent from offering Prayer in congregation. The Holy Prophet [saw] labeled as hypocrites all those who intentionally missed the congregational *Fajr* and *Isha* Prayers. He said: "If it were permissible, I would take wood and set the houses of such people on fire!"

(*Sahih Bukhari, Kitabul Azan, Baab Fadhlul Isha fil Jamaat.*)

The 4th Khalifa[rh] also said: "Surely, it shows that he was much concerned about the punishment for those people on the Day of Judgment. This expression means that instead of burning in Fire on Judgment Day, it is better for them to burn here in the worldly fire. The second meaning appears to be that it is better for those houses to burn and turn into ashes that are populated at the time when the House of God needs to be populated."

(*Jalsa Salana Speeches before Khilafat – 'Reality of Prayer'* 1972, p. 203).

The 4th Khalifa[rh] further said:

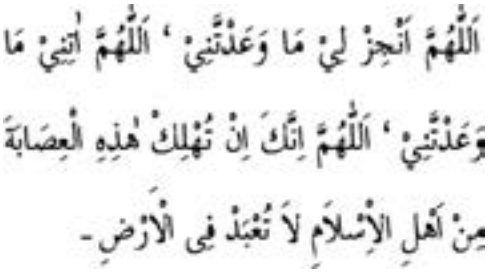
"It is evident from the history of Islam that as long as the Muslim *Ummah* kept the Houses of God – that is – the mosques populated, their houses remained populated. And it was always the season of Spring in the Garden of Muhammad[saw]. But when they left the mosques and remained in their houses, then all kinds of wilderness and destructions came upon the *Ummah*. Thus, establishment of congregational Prayer is the life and soul of the Muslim *Umma*. And in fact, their homes were populated only as long as they kept their mosques occupied.

Those men who are themselves offering Prayer in congregation, they should advise their brothers, children and friends to go to the mosques, and should not rest until the mosques are fully occupied and flourishing. Those ladies for whom it is not obligatory to go to mosque for Prayers should not allow their husbands, children and brothers to sit at home when it is time for the congregational Prayer. They should not rest until their homes are empty at *Salat* time and the Houses of Allah are full. In this age, it is a great *Jihad* . . . What is the problem? Ahmadi ladies, sisters and daughters! How come you do not close the doors of your homes on Ahmadi men for the sake of such a great *Jihad* in this peaceful and contented time!

('72 *Jalsa speech*, p.203-204)

Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad Sahib[rh] further said:

The Holy Prophet[saw] understood the reality of Prayer in the light of the Qur'anic teachings from his Lord. He transformed into action the excellent picture of Prayer drawn from the Holy Qur'an. He advised his Companions accordingly and they were colored in this same light. Thus, at the battle of Badr, when it was feared that these Companions would be killed, the Holy Prophet[saw] prayed for them in these words


اَللّٰهُمَّ اَنْجِزْ لِيْ مَا وَعَدْتَنِيْ ، اَللّٰهُمَّ اٰتِنِيْ مَا
وَعَدْتَنِيْ ، اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّكَ اِنْ تُهْلِكْ هٰذِهِ الْعِصَابَةَ
مِنْ اَهْلِ الْاِسْلَامِ لَا تُعْبَدْ فِي الْاَرْضِ -

O Allah! Give me what You promised me. O Allah! grant me what You promised me. O Allah! If this Muslim community is destroyed, none will worship You on the earth."

(Jami Tirmidhi Kitabut Tafsir, Tafsir Surah al-Anfal)

That is, O, my Allah! This is the essence and the soul of the worshippers that I have prepared purely to worship you. These are the worshippers that there is no one to be compared with them. Thus, today, if you

allowed them to perish in the battle ground of Badr, then, our Lord! There shall remain no one to worship you on the face of the entire world. That is, you shall not be worshipped again.

This time, O Ahmadi young men, elders, children and women! You are out to do battle with the great powers of the world. But your numbers are so small, your condition so weak and insignificant, and you are without any resources that it is like a grain of dust compared to the majesty of the Himalayas.

If you wish that defeat should be the destiny of the worldly powers, and that victory should be yours, then stand up and demonstrate your humbleness and meekness, and become deserving recipients of that prayer of the Holy Prophet[saw] that he made before the battle of Badr. Become so dedicated in offering your Prayer, and offer it so perfectly, that the Prayer is protected because of you, and you are protected because of the Prayer.

(*Essence of Prayer, Speeches before Khilafat*, p.213)

THIS IS THE DUTY AND DISTINCTION OF EVERY AHMADI

The 4th Khalifa[rh] also pointed out that the Holy Prophet[saw] in his admonitions did not leave any room for excuses to not offer the prayers in congregation. Once it was inquired of him, "O Prophet of Allah, if I am alone on a journey, how then could I do the congregational prayer?" The Holy Prophet[saw] said that if you are alone on a journey, then call out the Azan and if someone else who is on a journey comes and joins you, then you will have congregational prayers. But if no one else shows up, then call the *Takbir* and start your congregational prayer. Allah's angels will descend from heaven and join in offering congregational prayer with you.

(Bukhari, Kitab ul Azan, chapter Rafaussat ul bil nida)

The 4th Khalifa[rh] further said:

"You have a complaint about not having enough mosques. But remember that the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] said: "Of all the special honors Allah has blessed me with, a distinctive honor is that the whole earth has been made a mosque for me."

So take heed, O men and women of Ahmadiyyat! No one can keep you from the mosque when the whole world is your mosque! You cannot have this complaint till the day of judgment that you did not have a *masjid* to offer congregational Prayers. Wherever you find a couple of yards, offer your congregational *Salat* and this *Salat* will be very acceptable to Allah.

(Speeches of *Jalsa Salana*, 1976, p.292)

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] gave similar advice to a shepherd, telling him to offer his prayers in the desert after calling Azan; maybe someone would join him and if not, then angels would.

Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad[rh] further said:

"The life of Ahmadiyyat is in the mosques. The future of Ahmadiyyat requires staying connected with the mosques. The satisfaction and contentment of Ahmadiyyat is attached with the mosques. Those hearts that are attached with the mosques are guaranteed satisfaction and contentment by God. Therefore, go to the mosques for prayer. Now is such a time that the entire Community must put forth greater effort in prayer.

The 4th Khalifa[rh], referencing the battle of Hunain, drew attention to the Companions whose mounts had stampeded in fright during the battle. Under attack and seeing his Companions being carried away, the Holy Prophet[saw] told Abbas to use his powerful voice to call them to come back, which he did.

Upon hearing the call of Abbas to come to the Holy Prophet's aid, the other Companions abandoned their mounts, and in some cases, even cut their throats to bring them to a halt so the Companions could race back to protect the Holy Prophet[saw].

In like manner, the 4th *Khalifa[rh]* exhorted all Ahmadis to heed the call of the Holy Prophet[saw] to protect the congregational Prayers.

"O Community of the Promised Messiah[as]! O servants of Muhammad Mustafa[saw]! Today, I convey to you the call of the Holy Qur'an and of God's Messenger that you come to *Salat.*

"If the mounts of your egos are not under your control, and their necks do not turn in the direction you wish, then cut those throats and slaughter your selfish desires! And run to populate the mosques, saying: 'Here I am, my Lord! Here I am, my Lord!' In this is the life of Ahmadiyyat. In this is the happiness of your homes. And through this you will become the recipients of Allah's safety and security. Without it, there is no other door of Allah's Grace. This is the path of worship that will

put you on the magnificent path of Allah's continuous Favors."

(Speech: *Establishment of Prayer*, Jalsa 1976, p.296)

On the occasion of the opening ceremony of Baitul Futuh Mosque in London, Hadhrat *Ameerul Momineen*[aba] gave this important message to the entire Community, saying:

"Do not be happy merely because you have built a mosque. You also have to keep the mosques well-populated; otherwise, what will be the difference between us and others?"

Here in America, on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the mosque in Houston, Hazoor[aba] delivered this message:

"We have to constantly work hard to keep this mosque populated. . . because the real purpose of building mosques is that the servants of Allah should gather in them to worship One God. The real beauty of mosques is dependent on the worshippers who pray in them."

At a *Khuddamul Ahmadiyya*, Australia, *Ijtima* in 2004, the 5th Khalifa[aba] brought the subject of Prayer to their attention, saying:

"Pay full attention to offering the Prayers. Put extraordinary effort to do so, because it is vital. If your *Salat* is done properly and in the correct way, you will have all manner of success.

"All your progress depends on it. Allah says in the Holy Quran: 'Those believers are successful who safeguard their Prayers'."

He said: "It is Prayer that, in reality, will conquer the world for Islam. The dreams to conquer the world are in vain if we are unable to conquer our own egos. Bow down before Allah and discharge your obligation to worship Him."

(*Al-Fazl* Int'l, Jan. 23, 2004)

THIS IS THE DUTY AND DISTINCTION OF EVERY AHMADI.

In the beginning I mentioned one extract from Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] where he said that the Holy Prophet[saw] immediately used to stand up to offer Prayer whenever he faced any difficulty or trial. Now, let us see how Hadhrat *Ameerul Momineen*[aba] proved this saying to be true.

In March 2004 he visited West Africa -- he went to Burkina Faso and travelled to some other localities as well. The roads were unpaved and muddy, and during his travels, one of the vehicles ahead of his car went off the road and rolled over in a ditch.

Two security guards, the *Ameer Jama'at* of Ivory Coast, two missionaries and two local Jama'at members were in that vehicle.

As soon as Hazoor[aba] came to know about the accident, he immediately raised his hands and started to offer Prayer in his car. After finishing his *Salat,* he came out of his car and was perfectly calm, content and dignified. Everyone else was nervous and afraid, anticipating the worst from the resulting crash.

SubhanAllah, al-Hamdulillah, witness the miracle of Hazoor's Prayer, and witness its acceptance! One by one, each person was taken out of the car and all of them, by the grace of God, were unhurt. No one had received even a scratch!

(*Al-Fazl*, May 25, 2004)

Some people think offering *Salat* in congregation takes too much time and is very difficult to accomplish, but when you take the average person's expected lifetime of 70 years and calculate the amount of time spent praying five times a day in congregation, it comes out to be only five months out of an entire life!

(*Daily Al-Fazl*, Dec. 31, 2009, p.59)

Hadhrat *Ameerul Momineen*[aba] identified 30 causes of marriages breaking up. In the list that he sent to all the National *Ameers*, the top-most contributing cause was the lack of regularity in offering the five daily Prayers in congregation.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] has made this wise observation:

"I have not seen anything as effective as Prayer in congregation to bring good and virtuous acts. The greatest thing for creating good morals is Prayer in congregation. With God as my witness, no matter how wicked a person might be, if he offers his daily Prayers in congregation, he will be reformed."

(*Tafseer-e-Kabeer*, vol. 7, p.652.)

Delay in Offering Prayers Creates Grief in the Righteous

Once around *Maghrib* time, when the sun was about to set and the horizon was all orange and yellow,

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] thought that he had forgotten to offer *Asr* prayer.

In his sudden, overwhelming grief over believing he had missed his prayers, he became dizzy and felt he was about to fall down and die. Just then, he remembered someone had called him for prayers near the end of *Asr* time and that he had completed *Asr*.

Hadhrat *Al-Hajj Maulana Hakeem* Nur-ud-Din[ra], who later became the First *Khalifa* of the Promised Messiah[as], was once in Medina, and he missed his *Zuhr* Prayer in congregation. He was so sad and perturbed that he thought that "it was such a great sin that it was unforgivable." He got scared and became very pale. He was afraid of even entering the mosque.

Fortunately, there is a door called *Baab-e-Rahmat* (Door of Mercy) on which is written: (Arabic Qur'anic text:

Say, 'O My servants who have sinned against their souls, despair not of the mercy of Allah, surely, Allah forgives all sins. Verily, He is Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful.' [39:54]

Even after reading this comforting verse, he entered the mosque in fear, agitated and upset. He started his Prayer standing in between the Prophet's[saw] pulpit and his blessed chamber and prayed: "O my Lord! Forgive this fault of mine!"

(*Hayat-e-Nur* by Abdul Qadir, pp.59-60)

Emphasizing the value of the congregational Prayers, the current *Khalifa*[aba] reminded all the members of the *Jama'at* that:

"To obtain dignity and receive the blessings of *Khilafat*, the first and foremost condition is to establish Prayer -- because offering Prayer and worshipping God bring down the Grace of Allah. Therefore, every Ahmadi must keep in mind that we will take benefit from the favor granted to us in the form of *Khilafat* only when we safeguard our daily Prayers."

(*Khutbaat-e-Masroor*, vol. 5, p.151; *Al-Fazl*, Nov. 23, 2012, p.1)

During the time of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw], the female Companions also used to go for Prayers in congregation, because the Holy Prophet[saw] had said:

"Do not stop ladies from going to the mosque at night time."

(*Bukhari, Kitab-e-Jumah*)

Hadhrat Ayesha[ra] narrates:

"Many Muslim women, wrapped in covering sheets, used to offer *Fajr* Prayer with the Holy Prophet[saw]."

(*Bukhari Kitabus Salat*; *Al-Fazl*, Dec. 31, 2009, p.51)

The Holy Prophet[saw] stated the following about the importance of being regular in congregational prayers:

1. The one who offers prayers in congregation receives 27 times more blessings than one who does the prayer alone.

2. The one who leaves home for the *masjid* after carefully performing ablution will be rewarded with blessings for every step he takes towards the masjid. And when he sits quietly and does *Zikr-e-Ilahi* (remembrance of Allah) and waits for the Imam, then Allah's angels pray for him that may Allah forgive him and have mercy on him and open any one of the eight gates of Paradise he chooses on the Day of Judgment.

3. Those who travel farther distances to offer congregational prayers reap greater blessings.

(Sahih Bukhari, Kitab ul Azan; Al-Fazl, 31 Dec. 2009, p.7)

Doing the five congregational prayers is like having a stream flowing by a person's front door. If that person takes a bath five times a day, clearly, there will be no dirt left on that person. Similarly, by praying five times a day, one's sins will be washed away completely.

(*Al-Fazl*, Dec. 31, 2009, p.5)

Hadhrat Umar[ra] used to offer *Tahajjud* Prayer in great humility, devotion and reverence. At the arrival of *Fajr* time, he would wake his family, reciting the verse [Arabic text:

"Ask your family to offer Prayer!"

(*Muta, Kitabus Salat fi Salatul lail*)

In *Bukhari, Kitab-us Salat*, the event is recorded: On the day Hadhrat Umar[ra] received the wound, after the night, when people woke him up at *Fajr* time, he said: "Anyone who does not offer the Prayer, he has no part of Islam in him" -- and then he offered his Prayer while his wound was still bleeding.

(*Bukhari, Abwab Salatul Khoaf*; *Al-Fazl*, p.47, Dec. 31, 2009)

Here, I wish to relate the story of my very revered teacher and Principal of *Jamia*, the late Hadhrat Mir Daud Ahmad Sahib.

"It was our last year of *Jamia*, and offering Prayer in congregation was such a strict obligation that no one could even think of escaping it in any way, nor would they desire to. But one night was very cold, with heavy rain and a bad storm, and one of our friends could not make it to the mosque to offer his Prayer in congregation. He wrote in his daily diary that he missed Prayer in con gregation due to the rain and the storm and the mud on the way to the mosque.

On reading that excuse, Hadhrat Mir Sahib wrote a note saying: "True love is recognized on such occasions. Had you gone for congregational Prayer, you would not have melted, nor been scratched, nor blown away! Always attempt to offer Prayer in congregation!"

Seerat-e-Daud, p.76)

A Scene of Congregational Prayer in Qadian

Hadhrat Dr. Mir Muhammad Ismail Sahib narrated that he saw at the time of Hadhrat Mirza Sahib[as] men openly crying during Prayers -- particularly while in prostration -- much more so compared to now-a-days. The emotional weeping came from all directions in the mosque.

The Promised Messiah[as] mentioned such weeping and crying from the members of his Community with extreme gratification. And if he gave any special speech or advice before the Prayer, there was such a great commotion in the mosque that even the most stone-hearted people would be affected.

The Promised Messiah[as] has written that: "a person should cry in *Salat* before God at least once a day."

(*Seerat-e-Mahdi*, vol.1 , pt.3, pp.620-621 #666)

In Love With Mosques

Recently, I read an amazing and moving story of a man who offered his Friday Prayer as usual in *Haram Shareef* Mecca, and started coming back to his house. On his way was a desolate mosque. He had passed by that mosque many times, but on that day he was surprised to see a car parked outside the deserted mosque. He went inside the mosque and found a young man sitting on a prayer rug, busy in reading the Holy Qur'an. He asked him if he had offered the prayer, and started calling *Azan* for the *Asr* Prayer. On that, the young man said something so odd that it gave the older man a shock of surprise. The young man was saying: "Congratulations! Today, congregational Prayer will be offered here." He asked the young man with whom was he talking? He replied he was talking with the mosque. On hearing that, the other man thought the young man must be insane. The young man said, "I am in love with mosques. Whenever I see an old or desolate mosque, I think that it must have been populated at some time in the past, and how much that mosque wished for someone to come and offer Prayer in it and remember Allah. I feel the pain of loneliness of the mosque, and I myself respond on behalf of the mosque. And I tell the mosque: By God I am in love with you and I will fulfill your wish. Then I go inside such a mosque, offer two *rak'ats* of Prayer and recite one Portion/*Siparah* of the Holy Qur'an, and then make this supplication: O, my Lord! O, my Creator! If You think that I have removed the fearsome loneliness of this mosque by Your remembrance, reciting Your Qur'an, and worshipping You, then remove the lonesomeness of my father's grave! You are the Most Merciful, Most Rewarding!"

Friends! Brothers and sisters! Train your children in such a way that they take care of their own Hereafter, and also that of their parents!

No one should be discouraged thinking that he has performed worship and offered *Salat*, but no result came from that worship. On this subject, Masih Mau'ood[as] narrated the following event:

A Zoroastrian sat for forty years in front of a fire, and remained busy in its worship. After 40 years, when he stood up, people used the dust of his feet to cure their eyes. When they put that dust on their eyes, their eyes were healed.

Seeing that, one Sufi was perplexed. He asked Allah: "How can a liar receive such a miracle?" In response, he heard a voice saying: "Why are you worried? Think about it -- if God does not let the hard work of a liar go to waste, what will be the status of a truthful person who comes to Him? And how much more of a reward will he receive?"

(*Malfoozat*, vol. 9, p.246)

Non-Muslim Opinions About Ahmadis

Diwan Singh Maftun, editor of *Riyasat*, Delhi, has written:

"As far as the Islamic traditions are concerned, no great religious leader can compete with an average Ahmadi, because to be an Ahmadi it is required that one should offer Prayer, keep the Fast, pay *Zakat* and observe all other religious obligations with full obedience."

(Taken from *Al-Fazl*, Rabwah, January 20, 2009, p.3; *Riyasat*: "*The Promised Messiah and Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya in the view of Just Friends.*" p.232)

The famous Pakistani writer, critic and historian, Ra'ees Jafarai Sahib once wrote this about Hadhrat Chaudhary Muhammad Zafrulla Khan Sahib[ra]:

"Chaudhary Sahib[ra] belongs to that sect which is commonly considered as "non-believers" or "those who lost their way." However, this non-believing and lost man keeps a beard without any shame, and offers his Prayer openly in the sessions of the United Nations. When the horrible train accident of Jhampir occurred, this man was offering *Fajr* Prayer in his compartment."

(*Monthly Khalid*, Rabwah, Dec. 1985, p.13)

The life-long enemy of Ahmadiyyat and the founder of *Jama'at* Islamiyya, Maulana Abul A'la Maudoodi, makes this amazingly frank and telling observation about Ahmadis when he writes: "Protection and progress of the *Mirzais* is manifesting from the unseen, while on the other hand, the destruction of the opponents of the *Mirzais* is also manifesting from the unseen."

(Tarjamanul Qur'an, August 1934, pp.57-58)

The famed poet and scholar Allama Iqbal once stated:

Observations About Ahmadis from Other Ahmadis

"Hadhrat Baba Karam Ilahi Sahib was punctual in offering Prayers and *Tahajjud*. And he always offered his Prayers in the mosque. Five years prior to his death, he suffered from cataract and he lost his eye -sight. But still, he used to go to the mosque by guessing his way and touching the walls."

(*Guldasta-e-Darwiashan kay Phool*, p. 46)

Respected Sheikh Fazl Ahmad Batalvi Sahib writes that Hadhrat Maulana Sher Ali Sahib[ra] was so insistent on offering prayer in congregation that if he entered a mosque where they had already finished the congregational *Salat*, he would go to another mosque in search of a congregational Prayer that had not yet been done.

(Daily *Al-Fazl*, January 23, 2003, p.4)

The dedication of Ahmadis who travel long distances to pray in congregation is also worthy of note for the example it sets.

Hadhrat Mian Imam Din Sahib[ra] and his wife, without exception, would both go to Qadian for *Jumu'ah* Prayer from Qila' Darshan Singh, District Gurdaspur. They would come on foot every Friday morning, and walk back after the *Jumu'ah* Prayer. They never once complained about the distance or cared about the severity of either hot or cold weather.

(*Asshab-e-Ahmad*, vol. 1, p.103; *Al-Fazl*, Jan. 23, 2003, p.4)

And there is no better example of the sacrifice and steadfastness of Ahmadis in their love for Islam, the Holy Prophet[saw], and for praying in congregation than to witness how they submit to God when they suffer violence at the hands of other Muslims.

On October 30th, 2000, at *Fajr* Prayer time, Muslim extremists opened fire in our mosque in Ghatiyalian, District Sialkot. Five Ahmadis were martyred in *Salat* and many more were injured. All of them were punctual in observing the five daily prayers.

Among them, respected Ata Ulaah Sahib had first offered his *Tahajjud* Prayer and then *Fajr*. Sixteen-year-old Shahzad Ahmad awoke three of his younger brothers and took them for Prayer. Seventy-year-old Naseer Ahmad, who was severely injured, was very regular in offering Prayers, had never missed any *Fajr* Prayer and was punctual in offering other Prayers in the mosque as well. All these fortunate ones were made the target of terrorism."

(*Al-Fazl*, Nov. 13, 2000)

A decade later, on May 28th 2010, Ahmadis again showed their steadfastness in worshipping Allah in the face of evil and merciless persecution. Eighty-six Ahmadis were

murdered in cold-blooded terrorist attacks on two of our mosques in Lahore during Friday Prayers. Many of them died while reciting *Darood Shareef* or in prayer before the start of the sermon, either standing, sitting or in prostration before Allah.

And while the ones doing the killing claimed to be the true Muslims, that honor was being demonstrated by the ones being killed and wounded, those whose blood was split in silent proof of their submission to Allah, even unto death. [*nara takbir*]

They and countless other martyrs of Ahmadiyyat are our heroes and our reminders of the sacrifices we all pledge to make in defense of our faith and in submission to our beloved Allah.

Once again I come to my purpose of upholding the love for Allah and the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] by the sanctity and observance of the congregational Prayer.

It is the key that unlocks the door to the spiritual ascension of all believers. It is what can bring a person face to face with God. For this coming-together, the drum-beater of the Islamic kingdom announces five times each day in every town and city:

Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar!
O, people! Come visit your King!
Then, another sound of this drum-house ascends:

Ash-hado allaa ilaha illullah!
I worship Allah alone, and I do not bow my head before anyone but Him!
Again, he says:

Ash-hado anna Muhammadar Rasoolullah!
That I proclaim openly that no one is greater than Muhammad[saw] in conveying the message of Allah the Exalted to the world.
Then he says:

Haiya allus salah
Come, come! And gather all of you to bow down before God! Come running! Look, you are being presented before God.
And then he says:

Haiya allal falah
Come, come! Success is ready and waiting to receive you!
Here, the drum-beater once again announces:

Allahu Akbar, Allahu Akbar!
I express this truth that Allah is the greatest, Allah is the greatest!
At the end, he says:

Laa ilaha ilullaah!
There will be no other kingship left on the surface of the earth but that of the Heavenly Kingdom of God! Only He shall be the King, and only His command will govern the world!

(Summary from *Sair-e-Ruhani*, p.616)

"Take note! Muslims carried the sound of this drum-beat at the dawn of Islam, and from Arabia it spread all over the world!

But, alas! Muslims forgot to beat this drum and silenced it. On hearing the sound of that drum-beat, millions used to gather, but then they were reduced to hundreds. And even then 99% only come to sit and stand and then leave.

Then, the awe of that drum-house vanished. The shadow of Islam started to shrink, and God's Kingdom ascended to the heavens once again, and the world fell back into the clutches of Satan.

But once again, God's drum-beat is in an uproar and a great commotion. And to you, yes, to you, and to you -- God has given the task and challenge of being the drum-beater once again!

O, musicians of the Heavenly Kingdom! O, musicians of the Heavenly Kingdom! O, musicians of the Heavenly Kingdom!

Beat this drum so loudly once again that it becomes a deafening sound for the whole world to hear! Fill this trumpet once again with the blood of your heart so that even the angels tremble and the heavens are shaken!

And by your grief-stricken tones and your cries of "*Allahu Akbar*" and your exalted shouts of Unity and "*Ahad*!" once again God descends upon the earth and once again His Kingdom is established!

So listen to me! And follow what I am saying! Whatever I am saying, it is God speaking. . .

I am conveying to you the voice of God! You should listen to me! May God be with you; may God be with you; may God be with you

(*Sair-e-Ruhani*, pp.619-620)

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PAY ZAKAT

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"I AM WITH YOU, O MASROOR" DIVINE SUPPORT OF KHILAFAT AND JAMA'AT

Falahuddin Shams

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَنَا

It was over fourteen hundred years ago that our Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] along with Hadhrat Abu Bakr[ra] were hiding in a cave on their way to Medina. They were trying to escape the enemies in Mecca who were looking for them and had pledged to kill the Holy Prophet[saw] and destroy his new religion called Islam. The enemy had reached the mouth of the cave. The Holy Prophet[saw] and Hadhrat Abu Bakr[ra] could hear the sound of their footsteps outside and there was no other way out of the cave.

That is the time when the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] assured Hadhrat Abu Bakr[ra]:

لاَ تَحْزَنْ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَنَا

Don't worry, Allah is with us.
(9:40)

These were words of strength and devotion, full of faith and certainty. Allah protected them and the enemy went away and the words of the Holy Prophet came true profoundly and in an unbelievable manner when Allah protected them with the help of a weak web of a spider. Later on, throughout the life of the Holy Prophet[saw] these words *Innallaha Ma'anaa* kept on proving that they were true. Whether it was the battle of Badr with 300 ill-prepared Muslims against 1000 skilled and armored Meccans, all the way up to the time of victory of Mecca, it was clear to everyone that Allah was with the Holy Prophet[saw] and his community. In a way these words applied to Hadhrat Abu Bakr[ra] since he became the first *Khalifa* of Islam that Allah is with him also. The Holy Prophet[saw] did not say that Allah is with "him" but Allah is with "us" which included Hadhrat Abu Bakr[ra]. So the help from Allah and signs that He was with the community of Muslims continued throughout the *Khilafat* of Islam of which the first *Khalifa* was the man in the cave with the Holy Prophet to whom he had spoken the words *Innallaha Ma'anaa.*

Revelations of the Promised Messiah[as]

With the advent of the Promised Messiah[as] in the person of Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, in accordance with the prophecies of the Holy Prophet[saw], Allah once again assured His appointee that He is with him.
Allah revealed to him at many occasions, to assure him of His support.

Inni Ma'akaa wa maa ahlikaa:

I am with you and with your progeny.

(Tadhkira 393)

Inni Maarrasool Aqoom:

I will stand by My messenger.

(Tadhkira 381)

Inni Maarrasool Ajeeb:

I will answer taking the side of My messenger.

These are just a few of the revelations. The Promised Messiah[as] had explained himself that it was the assurance of Allah being with him that provided him the support. He said that he received so much hate mail that the total of letters reached in thousands. Each one of these letters had so much filth and name-calling in it that a person could not bear to read even one of them. But he said that every night when he would put his head on the pillow to sleep, he would start getting the revelations and assurance from Allah that He is with him and He will be his protector. These were the same soothing words that Allah had spoken to remove the concerns and uneasiness of two of His people in that cave."

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَنَا

Allah's signs for support of Jama'at

Allah provided the same support to the community of the Promised Messiah[as]. There were specific revelations that applied to different *Khulufa* of Ahmadiyya Community and we saw them fulfilled. At every occasion when the enemy came close by and it looked as if they would succeed in their evil plans, Allah's decree prevailed and He showed us through the results that He was with us.

In particular, there is a revelation of the Promised Messiah[as] which specifically applies to our fifth *Khalifa* Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad.

اِنِّيْ مَعَكَ يَا مَسْرُوْر

I am with you O' Masroor.

It is under this revelation that we have seen numerous times how Allah is with us and how he supports us at every calamity. It is precisely what our spiritual leader Hazoor advises us at those occasions whether it is a massacre in the Lahore mosque or individuals persecuted in Bangladesh, Indonesia or any other part of the world. He has said this in so many Sermons and speeches that "Allah is with us".

Biggest opponent Pakistan's destiny

Among all the nations, Pakistan has been in the forefront in opposition and persecution of our *Jama'at*. It is the only country in the world in which violation of human rights and religious freedom are exercised by law. Whether it is the lawmakers of that country, the administration, judiciary or the law enforcement agencies, they are all involved in violation of fundamental human rights of Ahmadis collectively.

It is amazing how Allah has shown his signs in reference to Pakistan in support of the *Jama'at*. The country of Pakistan today has lost its prestige and honor as a nation. Every human rights agency , whether they are under the UNO or not, has issued statements and continues to issue warnings about the religious and human rights violations taking place there. Amnesty International, the United States government through its state department and other agencies have clearly stated how degrading the situation Pakistan has created for its Ahmadi citizens. In addition, Pakistan is considered the producer and supporter of terrorists in the world.

It was a few decades ago that the President of Pakistan Ayyub Khan came for an official visit to the USA. At the airport, greeting him were President John F Kennedy, Mrs. Jackie Kennedy, Secretary of State Mr. Dean Rusk and many other US leaders. They were waiting for him to walk down the stairs down from the PIA plane with a red carpet laid out for him. After visiting the Guard of honor, a 21 gun salute was given in his honor. The streets of Washington DC were lined up on both sides with Americans waving Pakistani flags while he was cruising along President Kennedy in his glass top limousine waving back at them. The President of the USA gave him a state dinner which was unprecedented in the history of the USA ,at Mount Vernon, the resting place of George Washington. To top it all off, he was requested to speak to the joint session of congress which he did. Pakistan was an honorable country and USA acknowledged it and honored its President at the time.

Today, Pakistan is a nuclear power which should have demanded much higher status, but it has no respect in USA or in any other place. It is considered a terrorist country, producing, protecting and promoting terrorism. You can imagine in a fairy tale that the President of the USA would go to the airport to receive the President of Pakistan. This entire decline in its status has been brought by its own actions and Allah's decree that he gave to the Promised Messiah[as]:

اِنِّيْ مُهِيْنٌ مَّنْ اَرَادَ اِهَانَتَكَ

that whoever would try to humiliate you, I will humiliate him.

Despite all the evil efforts on the part of Pakistan and some other nations, *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya under the leadership of its *Khalifa* is progressing every day. It is established in 200 countries with its satellite programs through MTA reaching the corners of the earth. Allah is showing signs everywhere in the world that He is with this *Jama'at*

and he is with Masroor who is its spiritual leader.

Marshall Islands Sign of Senator Alik

Even in a small country in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, called Marshall Islands ,the signs of support of Allah for this *Jama'at* have been seen and are apparent. It is a country which most people are not even aware of and is hard to find on the map. I am a witness to these signs and will only present you with just one of them. It is a sign that I have witnessed from the beginning until it came to a sorrowful end this year in February.

A few years ago, in the Marshall Islands Parliament, Senator Alik who later became the Deputy Speaker of the House started a debate against Islam and it continued for three days. There were only a couple of families who were Ahmadi Muslims and no other Muslims were on that island. He said that Muslims are here and they are all terrorists and we should not let them establish themselves here. He also stated that they will eventually build a mosque here and he even gave a location which he thought was going to be the site of the mosque. Our Ahmadi members were not that knowledgeable because after they had accepted Islam and Ahmadiyyat, no missionary was assigned there and they did not get the proper education and training. They did not even know the *Salat* or that they had to fast in *Ramadan,* but they had a firm belief that they were Ahmadi Muslims and they believed in the Holy Prophet Muhammad, that the Holy Qur'an was their book and that the Promised Messiah[as] had come. They responded to these false allegations and their statements were printed in the newspaper stating that they were peaceful Muslims because they are Ahmadis and have nothing to do with terrorists. We have no idea how he came up with the suggestion of a mosque since there was no conversation or plans for it.

I was given the responsibility to build a mosque and visited there for the first time in May 2011. We had a few options on selecting a site for the mosque. I found out later that we selected the same place which Senator Alik had warned the Senate about.

During this visit, I signed the lease for the land. As soon as I signed it, we walked out of the attorney's office who was handling the legal documents. As we walked out, Senator Alik walked in to the attorney's office. Our Ahmadi member told us that he is the senator who spoke against us in the Senate. We went back inside to see him and discovered a miracle. Allah had taken his voice from him. His health was normal and he stated that himself by writing on a pad but he could not talk anymore. He wrote down that he was going to the Philippines to get further treatment. We discovered this even when many people in the government did not know about it and discovered it right after the instance we signed up for the location of the mosque.

In July of 2011, it was the front page story that Senator Alik will not be running for the Senate in the November elections and he is leaving politics. In August, there was a session of Parliament and he asked one of his staff members to read what he wanted to say since he could not talk anymore. Members of the Parliament objected and asked what kind of Speaker of the House do we have who cannot even speak. They demanded his resignation.

During my visit to Marshall Islands in September 2011, in addition to arranging for the construction of the mosque, through Humanity First I established the first computer training center to help the local people. The announcement of the opening of this center was in the newspaper while I was there before the opening and on the same page, the story appeared of the resignation of Senator Alik from the Senate.

After the mosque was constructed, in September 2012, I took along with me the newly appointed missionary of Marshall Islands so I could introduce him to the Ahmadis as well as others that we had created friendships with. At breakfast at a local restaurant, I saw the brother of Senator Alik and invited him to join us. After a general conversation about Islam, I asked him about his brother because we had not heard anything about him for a year. He said that he did not go to Philippines but instead went to USA in Texas for treatment. He also told us that they cannot do anything for him but if you pray for him, I believe he could recover. It was only two days later that we met with the President and Vice President of Marshall Islands in the President's conference

room and introduced the *Jama'at* to him. He assured us that they take pride in their freedom of religion policy and if anything happens we should let him know.

It was fascinating to me that whenever some news came about senator Alik, I was present in the Marshall Islands. I was visiting there only every two to three months and for a few days at a time. On my visit there in February 2013, his brother came to the mosque the day after I arrived there. He told me that the next day his brother is going to die because they are going to pull off the life support systems. He was understandably upset and said that they are going to murder my brother. He wanted to bring his body to the Islands so he can have a big funeral which is an important ritual in the Marshallese culture but Alik's wife did not allow that and he was buried in Texas.

This is such a great sign how Allah took care of our enemy while providing us the opportunity to establish a mosque and a *Jama'at* and it is one of the signs to provide assurance to the small Ahmadiyya community there that Allah is with them.

I am with you O Masroor and *Innallaha Ma'anaa*

While Allah keeps showing the signs for us in taking care of our enemies and brings them disgrace whether they are individuals or governments, He keeps on showering honors on our *Khalifa* and the *Jama'at.*

One of the signs of Allah's support comes in the shape of the intensity of love of the members of the *Jama'at* for its *Khalifa* and the institution of *Khilafat.* By Allah's grace, we saw signs of this love, respect and obedience from the very first day of the fifth *Khalifa.*

Right after he was elected as the new *Khalifa* so many of us were all gathered on the street outside the Fazl Mosque in London. All we heard was his voice "sit down". We didn't know if he was addressing the people inside the mosque. In an amazing manner the whole crowd on the streets outside sat down in obedience to the newly elected *Khalifa.* It was a scene that no one planned or imagined but was a reflection of the love and obedience that Allah had already instilled in the hearts of the Ahmadis for their *Khalifa.*

Honors bestowed on Hazoor and Jama'at:

Since that day, Allah has bestowed so many honors on Hadhrat Khalifatul Mesih V[aba] and his *Jama'at.* I could not possibly list all of them but will mention a few:

Congress address 2012

On 27th June 2012, a historic event took place at Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. Hadhrat Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba], addressed leading congressmen, senators, ambassadors, White House and State Department Staff, NGO leaders, religious leaders, professors, policy advisors, bureaucrats, members of the Diplomatic Corps, representatives of think-tanks and the Pentagon and journalists from the media. The meeting, the first of its kind, gave the opportunity to some of the most influential leaders in the United States, including Honorable Nancy Pelosi, the Democratic Leader in the House of Representatives, to hear first-hand Islam's message on world peace. Following the event, Hazoor was given a tour of the Capitol Hill building, before being escorted to the House of Representatives where a Resolution was introduced in honor of his visit to the United States. The introductory paragraph of the Resolution stated:

"Welcoming His Holiness, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, the worldwide spiritual and administrative head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, to Washington, DC, and recognizing his commitment to world peace, justice, nonviolence, human rights, religious freedom and democracy."

Honors in 2013 visit to Los Angeles

Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad[aba] delivered the keynote address at a special reception held in his honor at the Montage in Beverly Hills, CA on May 11 2013.

More than 300 politicians, academics and community leaders attended, including the California Lieutenant Governor, mayoral candidate Eric Garcetti, and several members of the United States

Congress.

During the event the Los Angeles City Council presented Hazoor with the golden key to the city, declaring:

"This Key is reserved for only the most honored people on Earth."

British Government honors for the Jama'at June 2013

An historic milestone is to be marked in Parliament for an Islamic community whose work Prime Minister David Cameron said 'Britain can be proud of.'

A very historical event was held on Tuesday 11th June 2013 at the House of Commons, where a special reception was held in honour of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba].

This was a very high profile event and attended by six Cabinet Ministers, including the Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg and the Home Secretary Theresa May, as well as 40 other parliamentarians and 30 other dignitaries.

Recently Hazoor addressed the European Parliament as well as the British Parliament giving them the true picture of Islam and how it is the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] who is the champion of peace for the whole world.

Closing

Allah has promised and He will continue to defeat and dishonor the enemies of *Jama'at* while providing continued growth and success through our *Khulufa*. Hazoor and the *Jama'at* are being recognized as the voice for human rights, religious freedom and peace in the international scene. At the same time, the enemies of the *Jama'at* are being looked as violators of fundamental human rights, blatantly opposing religious freedom and becoming the producers of chaos and unrest in the world through preparing, protecting and producing terrorists.

Urdu:

agar tera bhee kuchh deen hay badal thay jo main kahta hoon

keh Izzat mujh ko aur tujh per malamat aanay wali hay

Khuda ruswa karayga tum ko main izaaz paun gaa

Suno ay munkero ab yeh karamat aanay wali hay

I would like to give you a quote of Hazoor's speech of May 27, 2011 in which he explains this to the *Jama'at* in a humble manner, with humility, how Allah is our protector:

Translation of the Urdu quote

"Now, in the fifth Ahmadiyya *Khilafat,* the force of envy and opposition is intense. Defenseless Ahmadis were cruelly attacked and their blood spilled in a manner that appeared to have been done by creatures worse than animals, let alone humans. In addition, by posing as sympathetic to the Community, in some places internal efforts have been made to create discord. However, in accordance with God's promise, the *Khilafat* that is divinely supported has been contending with it. In fact it is God Who is contending with it.

Hazoor added: 'I am a weak and useless person, I have no influence. However, Ahmadiyya *Khilafat* has the support and help of that God Who is All-Powerful and He promised the Promised Messiah[as] that He will show His Mighty Power and He is doing so, indeed will continue to do so and the enemy will always fail in his plots and schemes."

As members of the Ahmadiyya *Jama'at* we should know that Allah will always be with us. When the enemies are nearby and we can hear their footsteps just as the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] experienced, we should repeat the same words. The words that our *Khalifa* keeps on repeating to us. We should repeat these words to each other and to the whole world. It does not matter if we say it in Arabic, English or Urdu or any other language. They are the same soothing and comforting words full of faith, conviction and strength that were spoken in the cave over fourteen hundred years ago by our beloved Prophet Muhammad[saw];

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَنَا

God is with us,

Khuda Hafiz

****

"I SHALL GIVE YOU A LARGE PARTY OF ISLAM" THE SPREAD OF AHMADIYYAT WORLDWIDE

Dr. Waseem Sayed

اَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَا شَرِيْكَ لَهٗ وَ اَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَ رَسُوْلُهٗ

اَمَّا بَعْدُ فَاَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ الرَّجِيْمِ

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

هُوَ الَّذِيْٓ اَرْسَلَ رَسُوْلَهٗ بِالْهُدٰى وَدِيْنِ الْحَقِّ لِيُظْهِرَهٗ عَلَى الدِّيْنِ كُلِّهٖ وَلَوْ كَرِهَ الْمُشْرِكُوْنَ ۝

اَفَلَا يَرَوْنَ اَنَّا نَاْتِي الْاَرْضَ نَنْقُصُهَا مِنْ اَطْرَافِهَا ؕ اَفَهُمُ الْغٰلِبُوْنَ ۝

Guests of the Promised Messiah[as]: *Assalamu Alaikum!*

The topic of my speech is "I shall give you a Large Party of Islam – the Spread of Ahmadiyyat Worldwide," and the verses of the Holy Qur'an that I have just recited relate to this very topic.

Fourteen hundred years ago, Allah the Exalted had promised to the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] that He would cause the Religion of Truth to prevail. And the Holy Prophet[saw] had informed the Muslims that this would be fulfilled in the latter days, in the days of Imam Mahdi and Masih Mau'ood[as].

The verse of *Sura Al-Saff* (Chapter 61), the second of the two verses I just recited, translates as follows:

He it is Who has sent His Messenger with the guidance and the Religion of truth, that He may cause it to prevail over all religions, even if those who associate partners with God hate it. [61:10]

The revelation that forms the title of my speech resonates perfectly with the promise Allah made to the promised Messiah[as] that, "I shall give you a large party of Islam."

I shall show that Allah has indeed manifestly fulfilled His promise and I submit that this is proof positive of Divine revelation in this age of disbelief.

God Himself shall indeed make Islam prevail over all other faiths but we have to do our part! And I will come back to this in the very end, *Insha Allah!*

That Allah has fulfilled His promise and continues to fulfill it is witnessed by us all regularly. Yes, everything is accomplished by the Help of God, and His Angels assist those who work in Allah's way, but some things are so manifestly the work of God that witnessing them one has to proclaim aloud that this is nothing but God's doing.

For example: For many years we could not get our message to the Arab speaking world…then, suddenly, and

miraculously, out of the unseen, the Hand of God manifested itself and we were bestowed MTA – Muslim Television Ahmadiyya - and our message began to reach the Arab population of the world and no one could impede its reaching them and we began to have scores and hundreds and 1,000's of them joining the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community.

Then recently, on May 10, just barely 2 months ago, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] talked about the need to convey the message of Islam Ahmadiyyat to the Hispanic communities in Latin America and suddenly we began to see doors opening wide all across these lands - doors that had hitherto remained tightly shut despite much effort.

We reached out to the same people we had been talking with for years in the Capitol region in the US and in Chicago and amazingly the people we extended our hands to, grasped them firmly and expressed their willingness to work with us in a manner and to an extent that we became afraid if we can cope with it.

The revelation on which the topic of my speech is based talks about a large party of ISLAM. It is therefore important for us to first look at the Muslim world and ask the question, who else is there, globally, speaking up for the religion of Islam, defending its name and honor?

When we look at the world of Islam we see a part of Syria dominated by one sect! In Saudi Arabia, another sect is dominant. The very name given to the country says it all. In Iran, Iraq there is yet another sect that holds sway. Actually there are numerous sects, some strong in business and renowned for it, others, fighting for or promoting this or that personal or family interest.

At best one may be able to say that in some Muslim majority nations they are working to better their STATE and yes, indeed, here and there, some small numbers gather together, every now and then, for the sake of Islam but soon splinter and disappear or their agenda gets hijacked by entities dedicated to violent jihad for the achievement of worldly objectives.

The Promised Messiah[as] has said clearly that he has nothing to do with countries and crowns. Look how forcefully he declares:

مجھکو کیا ملکوں سے میرا ملک ہے سب سے جدا مجھکو کیا تاجوں سے میرا تاج ہے رضوانِ یار

What have I to do with countries, my country is apart from all;
What have I to do with worldly crowns, my crown lies in pleasing my Beloved.

The first few words of the PLEDGE we Ahmadis took at the hand of *Ameerul Mu'minin,* Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V[aba] on May 27, 2008 sum this up beautifully:

"Today, on completion of one hundred years of Khilafat-e-Ahmadiyya, we pledge, calling God to witness, that we shall continue to try our utmost, till the very last breath of our lives, to propagate Islam and Ahmadiyyat, and to convey to the end of the earth, the name of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]..."

So I can stand here before you and say with full certainity that the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* is devoted to making Islam prevail all over the world!!!!

The Promised Messiah[as] was told in 1883 - by Allah that He would give him a large party of Islam. Allah's promises are true. And we see today that indeed a Large Party of Islam has been bestowed upon him. And soon, a day shall dawn, when the promise made by Allah of the final and total victory of Islam shall be fulfilled. And the minds, hearts and souls of the whole of humanity shall find comfort and solace in the message of Islam - except the few unfortunate souls for whom God has destined misguidance and error because of their own misdeeds.

In the other verse I recited at the beginning Allah says: *Do they not see that we are visiting the land, reducing it from its outlying borders? Can they even then be victorious? (21:45)*

I shall now sketch briefly how this has been happening, how Allah has fulfilled His promise to make the message of Islam-Ahmadiyyat prevail.

The battle of intellectual arguments was won by Ahmadiyyat long ago and that small unknown village from which the message of the Promised Messiah (as) emanated is now known the world-over. How powerfully and in what majestic EVER-LIVING words the Promised Messiah[as] himself describes what he was seeing with his piercing insight!

He says:

میں تھا غریب و بے کس و گمنام بے ہنر — کوئی نہ جانتا تھا کہ ہے قادیاں کدھر
لوگوں کی اس طرف کو ذرا بھی نظر نہ تھی — میرے وجود کی بھی کسی کو خبر نہ تھی
اب دیکھتے ہو کیسا رجوعِ جہاں ہوا — اِک مرجعِ خواص یہی قادیاں ہوا

"I was poor helpless and unknown and no one even knew where Qadian was! The people expected nothing from this corner of the world and they were totally unaware even of my existence. But now look how the world has turned to us and the select of humanity are turning to Qadian!"

Today, Islam Ahmadiyyat is Everywhere!

Branches of the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* are flourishing in 200+ countries. Everywhere, it is the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* that is called to speak about Islam. We defend the honor of Islam. We broadcast the true, beautiful peace-loving message of the Holy Qur'an all over the world. We stand up for the honor of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] in ways that do justice to his true personality.

New articles about Islam-Ahmadiyyat appear regularly in most popular media of the world and daily, in more languages, more and more nations are being provided literature on Islam-Ahmadiyyat.

New and larger mosques are being inaugurated with amazing frequency all over the world and every day these mosques are becoming smaller and smaller for the larger numbers attending them!

Jami'as – the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at's* Religious Seminaries – exist in every part of the globe producing 100's of trained missionaries every year...and soon these numbers shall reach the thousands.

Every day, more and more people are dedicating their lives to this great cause. Tens of thousands of such new devotees have pledged their lives to serve Islam under the direction of the man bestowed the holy Mantle of *Khilafat,* the pre-eminent bearer of the message of Peace that is the essence of Islam.

We are blessed with this bounty of Divinely established *Khilafat* on the pattern of Prophethood that no one else has and none can get, because it is Divinely established.

Look there is a distinction between Divinely made things and man-made things. Apple had a great phone but it was man made, so now many people say Samsung has a better one and soon there will be another even better and this will go on.

Even if the whole of the Muslim world was to come together and select a man to be their *Khalifa*, the question is how would they make Allah become his Support? How would they instill in the hearts of the people his love and obedience?

Under this Divinely established *Khilafat* we have built 15,000+ Mosques, 500 schools, 30 hospitals. We have translated the Holy Qur'an into 70+ Languages and regularly provide enormous amounts of printed material to whoever wishes to receive it. We have established a global TV station that broadcasts to the entire world the message of Islam-Ahmadiyyat, 24 hours a day, in a number of languages.

We have put up the most comprehensive web presence that is used by millions of people to get information about Islam-Ahmadiyyat in written or audio-video format.

We are at the forefront of helping humanity with projects that provide potable water, renewable energy, health, agriculture.... and the list goes on and on.

Innumerable projects of diverse nature to convey the message of Islam-Ahmadiyyat and to serve humanity continue to flourish and produce fruit...and countless numbers of devoted, dedicated souls are feverishly working away on the tasks assigned to them by the *Khalifa* appointed by God who leads this enormous enterprise...the enterprise that the *Imam* of the Age Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] had set up at the bidding of God.

Muslims also are receiving the message of Islam-Ahmadiyyat and daily, in larger numbers, many from among them are accepting the message of Ahmadiyyat & joining or adopting the very same teachings.

And this last point is what I want to delve into a little more now. This has to do directly with my topic, the revelation vouchsafed to the Promised Messiah[as] by God, in 1883, in English, in which Allah said to him, "I shall give you a large party of Islam."

So where do we stand today, 130 years later? How large a party of Islam has the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* become?

In order to address this issue we have to answer an important question: Who is an Ahmadi?

Yes, those who take *Bai'at*, but also those who have adopted the correct, pure & true Islam taught by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] that Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as] rejuvenated...at least to the degree to which they have accepted, adopted and are putting into practice these teachings.

Yes, there are tens of millions of Ahmadis all over the world.

But the impact of Islam-Ahmadiyyat is far greater and this can be gauged and measured by looking for the numbers of peoples who have adopted the values and meanings of Islam as explained and laid out by Ahmadiyyat.

Let it again be made clear that all these teachings are the pure original teachings of Islam as taught by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]. Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, the Promised Messiah[as] did nothing but rejuvenate them and this was his mission .

I will discuss just a few of these and very briefly, but in all matters, whether it is in regard to the death of Jesus[as]; or the meaning of *Khatm-e-Nubuwat,* or the essence of Jihad; or abrogation of Verses of the Holy Qur'an ...in all matters the Muslims are moving towards the positions and explanations laid out by the Promised Messiah[as].

Let me turn first to views relating to Jesus[as].

Many can be cited but let me mention Mr. Ghamidi, a well known and very popular scholar of the Muslim world. He says categorically that Jesus[as] was not raised alive to the heavens. He says further that his *rafa'* – his ascension - took place after his death. Furthermore he also categorically argues, using the same verses of the Holy Qur'an cited by the Promised Messiah[as], that Jesus[as] will never return to this world – period.

Let us now move to Saudi Arabia. Their Government has been distributing for some time now, the Translation and Commentary of the Holy Qur'an by Mr. Muhammad Asad.

This commentary says:

"Nowhere in the Qur'an is there any warrant for the popular belief that God has "taken up" Jesus bodily, in his lifetime, into heaven."

It goes on to say:

"The expression "God exalted him unto Himself" in the above verse denotes the elevation of Jesus to the realm of God's special grace - a blessing in which all prophets partake, as is evident from 19: 57, where the verb *rafa nahu* ("We exalted him") is used with regard to the Prophet Idris[as]."

The Promised Messiah[as] had prophesied:

"O mankind! hearken, this is the prophecy of God Who made the Heavens and the Earth. He will spread this Movement in all the countries and will give it supremacy over all through reason and arguments."

In all the countries! We are almost there already ...*Alhamdulillah!*

The Promised Messiah[as] went on to say:

"Remember, no one will descend from heaven. All our opponents who are living at present will die and not one of them will see Jesus, son of Mary, descend from the sky and then their children who survive them will also pass away and none of them will see Jesus, son of Mary, coming down from the heaven. Generations of their posterity will also perish and they too will not see the son of Mary descending from heaven."

The contemporaries of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] have all gone and none of them saw Jesus[as], son of Mary, descending from the heavens.

Their children and their children's children – and taking 25 years to be a generation – two more generations have come and the present, the fifth generation from the time of the Promised Messiah[as], has borne witness also to the failing of predictions of all sorts of people, every now and then, of the imminent coming of Jesus - without seeing him descend from the heavens!

What a powerful prophecy! How majestically stated and with utter confidence and full certainty.

The Promised Messiah[as] goes on to say:

"Then God will create restlessness in their hearts; that the day of the glory of the Cross had passed away and the world had taken another turn but Jesus, son of Mary, had still not come down from the sky. Then all the wise people will discard this belief and the third century from today will not have completed when all those who had been waiting for Jesus, both Muslims and Christians will despair of his coming and entertaining misgivings shall give up their belief.."

The Promised Messiah[as] concludes by saying:

"And there will be only one Faith in the world & one preceptor. I came only to sow the seed. That seed has been sown by my hands. It will now grow & blossom forth & none dare retard its growth."

At another place the Promised Messiah[as] had prophesied that a time will come when by Islam shall be meant Ahmadiyyat alone. The two terms shall become synonymous and we are already beginning to see the signs of this when we listen to world leaders talking about Islam.

When the subject is the Religion of Islam, it is invariably Ahmadiyyat that they refer to and its message of, "love for all, hatred for none," this is the benevolent face of Islam that they recognize from Ahmadiyyat.

Let me now turn to the subject of *Khatm-e-Nubuwat*. Having accepted the death of Jesus[as], there is now no other interpretation of *Khatm-e-Nubuwat* left for Muslims to accept than that espoused by the Ahmadiyya point of view if they wish to continue believing in the promise made by Allah, in *Sura Jumu'ah*.

وَّاٰخَرِيْنَ مِنْهُمْ لَمَّا يَلْحَقُوْا بِهِمْ ؕ وَهُوَ
الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ ۝

And *among* others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise. (62:4)

Now, let us look at the views of the Muslims of today about Jihad. Lo and behold what do we see! We see that the whole Muslim world now sings from the same song sheet written by the Promised Messiah (as) 100+ years ago! How powerfully the Promised Messiah[as] had ordered the Muslims to abandon the wrong interpretation of Jihad in 1902!

اب چھوڑ دو جہاد کا اے دوستو خیال دیں کیلئے حرام ہے اب جنگ اور قتال

"O friends abandon now any and every thought of violent jihad."

So go and look, see how they have all accepted his advice and adopted his stance and abandoned totally the false notion of violent Jihad and become as Ahmadi as you and me in this sense also.

The Holy Prophet[saw] had said that the *Imam* is your Shield – we have an Imam appointed by God and we work behind this shield and Hadhrat Muhammad[saw] has promised us protection and safety and Success.

Let me now turn to the notion still somewhat contentious among Muslims, "Abrogation of Verses of the Holy Qur'an."

It is strange and tough to believe bit true that at one time Muslim Scholars considered up to 600 verses to have been abrogated!

The Promised Messiah[as] was the first to proclaim that not one word or iota of the Holy Qur'an is abrogated. He challenged those who believe that a certain number of verses of the Holy Qur'an have been abrogated, to come forth in opposition to his declaration and that he would establish that not a single word of the Holy Qur'an has been abrogated. The Promised Messiah[as] says in *Ayena Kamalat-e-Islam*, p. 257:

تدبر سے ہوں گے۔ آپ کو یاد رہے کہ قرآن کا ایک نقطہ یا شعشہ بھی اوّلین اور آخرین کے فلسفہ
کے مجموعی حملہ سے نقصان کا اندیشہ نہیں رکھتا۔ وہ ایسا پتھر ہے کہ جس پر گرے گا اُس کو
پاش پاش کرے گا۔ اور جو اُس پر گرے گا۔ وہ خود پاش پاش ہو جائے گا۔ پھر آپکو دب کر

"You must remember that every dot and particle of the Holy Qur'an is safe from any harm due to the collected attacks from the philosophies of those who came before and those who may come later. It is that rock which shall smash to smithereens whatever it falls upon and that which shall fall upon it will itself be pulverized."

An online article by Farooq Ibrahim describes the current situation accurately. According to Farooq Ibrahim, "Some Muslim scholars, especially of recent times do not believe in the concept of abrogation at all. What I do want to address is what a large number of modern Muslims scholars and teachers say about the whole issue of abrogation. Their views can, in general, be divided into the following two groups."

1. "Abrogation was abrogating older scriptures – Torah and Injil and not the Qur'an."

2. "The Qur'an itself claims that no part of it is at variance with another, and hence the doctrine of Abrogation is not supported within the Qur'an."

Now, this is precisely the position the Promised Messiah[as] took. So you see that modern Muslim scholars are now realizing the truths laid bare by the Promised Messiah[as]...and those given to attacking Islam [like this Farooq Ibrahim] now have to start working on how to maintain their attacks...

In summary, progress is being made on all issues, slowly but surely.

Some Muslims say, "ok, so Mirza Sahib came and let us even grant you that he was indeed the Promised Messiah and Mahdi but we do not see any progress...Islam, Muslims, the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet[saw] are still being maligned.."

What they do not realize is that when the Promised Messiah[as] came the world was about to become 100% Christian. Africa they had already claimed, Asia was in their grip. They had published their dreams that soon the flag of Christianity would fly above Mecca and Medina.

The Promised Messiah[as] and his *Khulafa* were the ones who stopped the march of Christianity and we see today that Islam is conquering the hearts, minds and souls of more and more of humanity every day and the world is beginning to realize that if humanity is to attain peace it will be through the Islam of Muhammad[saw] ... rejuvenated in this age by his most ardent and true servant Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad[as].

But let me now come to the one main issue people always seem to want to have addressed.

Let's talk about numbers. A friend narrates an interesting dialogue with an outsider, who once asked him: "Why do you say the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is small?" He pointed out that a sensible discussion has to be of comparison with respect to other Muslim sects. And that made so much sense to me.

There are some 72 sects in Islam and a total of some 1.6 billion Muslims in the world according to the latest Pew Research Center. Dividing 1.6 billion by 72 gives us 22 million. So, the tens of millions of Muslims belonging to the Ahmadiyya Muslim *Jama'at* indeed represent "A Large Party of Islam," surely the largest single united group of Muslims in the world! In every sense, this 1883, 130 years old revelation, "I shall Give You a Large Party of Islam," has been fulfilled.

Let me, in the end, remind us all, in the powerful words of the Promised Messiah[as] himself, what it is that the future holds for us & what it is that these great bounties of Allah that He has bestowed upon us require from us.

The Promised Messiah[as] says:

"Never think for a moment that God will let you go to waste; you are a seed planted in the soil by the very hand of God. God declares that this seed will sprout & grow & will branch out in every direction & will turn into a mighty tree. So blessed is he who has trust in the word of God & does not fear the intervening trials. Remember, it is essential for trials to come so that Allah may distinguish thereby, which of you is true in his covenant of Bai'at & which of you is false. He who stumbles in the course of any trial will not harm God in the least & his evil fate will lead him ultimately to hell. Would that he were not born. As for those who remain steadfast to

the end, no matter how many calamities, trials & trepidations they have to endure; & no matter how much the world mocks & laughs at them & holds them in disdain - these are the ones who will emerge victorious in the end, & the gates of blessings will be thrown open to welcome them."

"God addressed me and directed me to make it clear to my followers that those from among the people who have believed and their faith has no trace of worldly motives, nor is it blemished with cowardice and hypocrisy, whose faith never fails to comply with the requirements of obedience at any level."

"Such are the people held dear by God. It is about them that God declares that they tread the path of truth." (*al-Wasiyyat*; Roohani Khazain, Vol XX, p. 309)

"یہ مت خیال کرو کہ خدا تمہیں ضائع کر دے گا۔ تم خدا کے ہاتھ کا ایک بیج ہو جو زمین میں بویا گیا خدا فرماتا ہے کہ یہ بیج بڑھے گا اور پھولے گا اور ہر ایک طرف سے اس کی شاخیں نکلیں گی۔ اور ایک بڑا درخت ہو جائے گا۔ پس مبارک وہ جو خدا کی بات پر ایمان رکھے اور درمیان میں آنے والے ابتلاؤں سے نہ ڈرے کیونکہ ابتلاؤں کا آنا بھی ضروری ہے تا خدا تمہاری آزمائش کرے کہ کون اپنے دعوی بیعت میں صادق اور کون کاذب ہے۔ وہ جو کسی ابتلاء سے لغزش کھائے گا وہ کچھ بھی خدا کا نقصان نہیں کرے گا اور بدبختی اس کو جہنم تک پہنچائے گی۔ اگر وہ پیدا نہ ہوتا تو اس کے لئے اچھا تھا۔ مگر وہ سب لوگ جو اخیر تک صبر کریں گے اور ان پر مصائب کے زلزلے آئیں گے۔ اور حوادث کی آندھیاں چلیں گی اور قومیں ہنسی اور ٹھٹھا کریں گی اور دنیا ان سے سخت کراہت کے ساتھ پیش آئے گی۔ وہ آخر فتحیاب ہوں گے اور برکتوں کے دروازے ان پر کھولے جائیں گے۔

خدا نے مجھے مخاطب کر کے فرمایا کہ میں اپنی جماعت کو اطلاع دوں کہ جو لوگ ایمان لائے ایسا ایمان جو اس کے ساتھ دنیا کی ملونی نہیں اور وہ ایمان نفاق یا بزدلی سے آلودہ نہیں اور وہ ایمان اطاعت کے کسی درجہ سے محروم نہیں ایسے لوگ خدا کے پسندیدہ لوگ ہیں۔ اور خدا فرماتا ہے کہ وہی ہیں جن کا قدم صدق کا قدم ہے"۔

(روحانی خزائن جلد ۲۰ الوصیت صفحہ ۳۰۹)

Writing in his book, "*Fath-e-Islam,*" in 1890, the Promised Messiah and Imam Mahdi[as], spelt out the divinely appointed plan for the victory of Islam and he assured everyone that in the end:

"Truth will triumph and a new bright day will dawn again for Islam as it did before. The sun of Islam will again rise in full splendor, as it did before."

He warned, however that such a day would come only after we offer every sacrifice to bring it about. He said, "It is imperative that this should not happen until we have proved our worth by devoted hard work, by offering our life-blood, by sacrificing our rest and peace, by accepting all indignities for the dignity of Islam."

In his original words, he said:

جائے گا اور سچائی کی فتح ہوگی اور اسلام کے لئے پھر اُس تازگی اور روشنی کا دن آئے گا جو پہلے وقتوں میں آچکا ہے اور وہ آفتاب اپنے پورے کمال کے ساتھ پھر چڑھے گا جیسا کہ پہلے چڑھ چکا ہے۔ لیکن ابھی ایسا نہیں۔ ضرور ہے کہ آسمان اُسے چڑھنے سے روکے رہے جب تک کہ محنت اور جانفشانی سے ہمارے جگر خون نہ ہو جائیں اور ہم سارے آراموں کو اُس کے ظہور کے لئے نہ کھو دیں اور اعزاز اسلام کے لیے ساری ذلّتیں قبول نہ کر لیں۔ **اسلام کا زندہ ہونا ہم سے ایک فدیہ مانگتا ہے۔ وہ کیا ہے؟ ہمارا اسی راہ میں مرنا۔** یہی موت ہے جس پر اسلام کی زندگی مسلمانوں کی زندگی اور زندہ خدا کی تجلّی موقوف ہے اور یہی وہ چیز ہے جس کا دوسرے لفظوں میں اسلام نام ہے۔ اسی اسلام کا زندہ کرنا خدا تعالیٰ اَب چاہتا ہے اور ضرور تھا کہ وہ مہم عظیم کے روبراہ کرنے کے لئے ایک عظیم الشان کارخانہ جو ہر ایک پہلو سے مؤثر ہو اپنی طرف سے قائم کرتا۔ سو اُس حکیم وقدیر نے اس عاجز کو اصلاح خلائق کے لئے بھیج کر ایسا ہی کیا اور دنیا کو حق اور راستی کی طرف کھینچنے کے لئے کئی شاخوں پر امر تائید حق اور اشاعت اسلام کو منقسم کر دیا۔ چنانچہ منجملہ ان شاخوں کے ایک شاخ تالیف وتصنیف کا سلسلہ

He says: "The new life of Islam demands a great sacrifice from us. What is this sacrifice? It is the sacrifice of our very lives and on this sacrifice now depends the very life of Islam, the life of Muslims, and the manifestation of God in our time. Sacrifice is the very essence of Islam. And this is the Islam that God wants now to restore. To bring about this great transformation, it was necessary that God should establish a Divine Enterprise adequate and efficient in all respects."

"So, He, the Most Wise, Most Powerful, brought this Divine Enterprise into being by sending this humble one to undertake this work of reforming mankind. This Divine Enterprise He had divided into several branches, all devoted to the dissemination of truth, the propagation of Islam."

The Holy Prophet[saw] is reported to have said: "He who knows his own worth will never perish."

There are many among us who work for some of the biggest and most successful companies of the world: Google, Exxon, J P Morgan Chase, Apple. But our real worth, our greatest worth, derives from the fact that we are workers, employees, devotees, blessed to be accepted to work in the GREATEST KAR-KHANA, the pre-eminent Enterprise, the FACTORY built by the Imam of the Age under the guidance of God for the defense of Islam.

In the very beginning I had made mention of the fact that WE ARE THE PARTY OF ISLAM. That we are the ONES who are working to spread the message of Islam and to defend its honor and the honor of the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet...We have to recognize that this - THIS is our real source of value and worth in the sight of God. It was to this very thing that Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] referred when he wrote in his famous poem:

تم مدبّر ہو کہ جرنیل ہو یا عالِم ہو

ہم نہ خوش ہونگے کبھی تم میں گر اسلام نہ ہو

Whether you become a great thinker, general or a renowned knowledgeable person; we will not be happy if you are not imbued with Islam!

May Allah fill our hearts, minds and souls with that faith and that love of Islam that the Promised Messiah (as) wanted to see in all of us and may He enable us to do all in our power and to the best of our abilities to go on spreading the message of Islam-Ahmadiyyat all over the world.

Aameen! Wa aakhiro da'wana anil hamdo lil-lahay rab-bil aalameen!

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HADITH

Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin Mas'ud[ra] relates that a man asked the Messenger[saw] of Allah, "How can I judge whether I am doing a good or a bad deed?" The Holy Prophet[saw] said, "If your neighbors say, you have done good, then certainly, you have done a good deed but when you hear them saying that you have committed an evil, then definitely you have committed an evil."

(Ibni Majah abwabuzzuhud bab thana-'al hasan)

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CHASTITY AND MODESTY—NOT JUST FOR WOMEN

Maulana Rizwan Hamid Khan

The requirement of men to dress modestly, lower the gaze, respect women, and avoid interaction and relations with women in our free-mixing permissive society. A man is expected to adopt a system of '*purdah*' just as a woman to promote a healthy social environment and prevent the abuse of women, a major problem in the world.

Dressing Modestly

"Verily the extravagant are brothers of satans, and Satan is ungrateful to his Lord." 17:28

On account of the basic psychological differences between men and women, Islam has assigned a specific type of veiling for each gender. In Islam, women are to refrain from showing off their physical beauty, and men are to refrain from showing off their wealth and status.

Narrated Ali ibn Abu Talib: The Prophet[saw] of Allah took silk and held it in his right hand, and took gold and held it in his left hand and said: both of these are prohibited to the males of my community.[1]

Islam teaches a specific type of veiling that is exclusively for men, and this difference has to do with the difference in the ways men and women look at one another.

An experiment was conducted in which models of varying attractiveness were presented in different 'costumes', outfits that conveyed a particular social status. One outfit was the uniform of a local fast food chain, another was an outfit generally associated with the middle class, and the third outfit was a blazer with a Rolex, which communicated wealth and status. Participants were shown pictures of models of the opposite gender and asked whom they would be more willing to date. A stark difference appeared in the way men and women gauged one another's attractiveness.

"Men said they were very willing to have coffee and conversation with the prettiest model, and they were completely indifferent to how she was dressed. Women, however, were affected by how the men were dressed: they were more willing to have coffee and conversation with men who wore the blazer and Rolex. In rating models' acceptability as dates, the greatest difference between men and women was in the effects of the high-status costume. For women, the high-status costume made the homely model acceptable as a date, but he was not acceptable when he wore the fast-food uniform. Men were not willing to date the homelier model in either costume. In fact, for women, the blazer and Rolex made the homely model more acceptable than the best-looking model in the fast-food uniform for all types of relationships. This was not true for men. We also asked men and women in the study to rate the models' attractiveness on a scale of one to five. Costumes did not affect men's ratings, but they did affect women's ratings." [2]

Men and women have fundamentally different standards that dictate who they find attractive, and it affects their way of approaching courtship as well.

This does not mean that all men are only interested in physical beauty and that all women are only interested in wealth and status, but it does mean that generally each gender is inclined to approach courtship in this way. The placing of greater importance on wealth and status by women is a phenomenon that is universally found in all cultures.

Ironically, this phenomenon is also found to be thriving particularly among highly educated and professional women who consider themselves liberated from gender specific behavior. Women who are in high paid or high status positions are rarely willing to date and marry a man who makes less than they do, no matter how handsome or nice a person he may be. This is not the case with men. A male doctor will have little problem marrying a nurse, but a female doctor is rarely able to bring herself to marry a male nurse. A female lawyer could rarely be convinced to marry a male secretary, whereas for men, if the woman is

physically attractive, they have little problem dating and marrying her regardless of her socio-economical status.

Thus, Islam has commanded that men be modest in showing their wealth and status. These teachings of Islam are not only in outward action, but are to be followed in principle as well. For example, although make-up is not specifically mentioned as a part of veiling, however, since the purpose of veiling is not to show off physical beauty, abstaining from wearing make-up when going out is a part of the spirit of veiling. Similarly, there are many things men do to show off their wealth as a way of attracting women. Some men buy expensive cars, tailored suits, and costly watches with the intention of attracting women thereby. The teaching of veiling for men is to abstain from ostentation, from showing off their socio-economic status, and to abstain from such extravagances is a part of the spirit of male veiling in Islam.

Thus, the instruction of veiling in physical beauty in women and material wealth in men is an instruction that applies in principle to both genders, however, they apply to a greater degree for each gender according to their natural psychological differences. For women, modesty in dress is emphasized in physical beauty, but in men, modesty in dress is emphasized in extravagance.

Also, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] explained[3] that the wisdom of men being forbidden from wearing silk and gold is to maintain masculinity among them and prevent them from inclining to femininity. Thus, a part of modest dress for men is that we avoid an appearance that is feminine. Some men grow their hair long or start wearing jewelry, however this goes against the masculinity that Islam seeks to emphasize in men.

Respecting Women and Avoiding Interaction and Relations with Women

We all know the importance of respecting women, but we are not always aware of it, and this makes a difference. For example, we know that it is disrespectful to stare at a woman because we would dislike it if someone looked at our wife or sister or daughter in the same way. We know that we should limit our interaction with women because if another man became too friendly with our wife or sister or daughter, it would make us uncomfortable. However, when someone looks at a woman with lust, he forgets that she is someone else's wife or sister or daughter. When someone starts becoming close friends with a woman, he forgets how it would offend her husband or brother or father. Thus, people's disrespect of women is a result of their failure to empathize, their open relationships with women is a result of not placing themselves in the shoes of the men in the family of those women.

Some people would insist that there is nothing wrong with staring at women, that it is a natural part of being a man and that it is a victimless crime. Or, they would insist that there is nothing wrong with being free with women, insisting that they are just friends. However, their example is like the time Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I[ra] once met a man who was a thief. The man insisted that there was nothing wrong with being a thief because he worked hard to earn his living just like everyone else. Hazoor[ra] asked him how he went about robbing people's homes. He described that he had a team of thieves, one work from the inside and reveal where the wealth was hidden, another was a locksmith and would open the door, another was an expert in sneaking in, taking the money, and escaping unnoticed, and one was a money launderer who would launder the money and then divide it among all of the thieves. Hazoor[ra] asked him what would happen if the money launderer stole more than his share when dividing the money? The man became angry and said that he would kill him because he is a thief. Despite the fact that the man was convinced that there was nothing wrong with stealing so long as he did it to others, but when he himself became the victim, he disliked it. He knew all along that stealing was wrong, he only became aware of it when he was on the receiving end.

Similarly, we all know that disrespecting women is wrong, but when men look at women with lust, they forget that what they are doing is wrong. They are like that thief who is convinced that there is nothing wrong with what he is doing, but if another man were to look at his wife or sister or daughter in the same way, he would dislike it. Similarly, we know that we would dislike it if a man became close friends with our wife or sister or daughter, but we forget that when we become friends with women. The Holy Prophet[saw] said, "When an adulterer commits illegal sexual intercourse, then he is not a believer at the time he is doing

it, and when a drinker of an alcoholic liquor drinks it, then he is not a believer at the time of drinking it, and when a thief steals, then he is not a believer at the time of stealing, and when a robber robs, and the people look at him, then he is not a believer at the time of doing robbery.[4] Similarly, when a person disrespects a woman by looking at her with lust, he is not empathizing at the time he is doing it, because he is forgetting how he would feel if someone else did the same to the women in his family.

To respect women, it is necessary that we not only know the importance of respecting women, but that we always be aware of it. When we see or meet a woman, we must always be aware that just as we are protective of the women in our family, she also has men in her family just like us who are protective of her, who feel indignation and offense if she is disrespected or if other men become too close with her. If we want to respect women and avoid interaction and relations with them, we need only to empathize with them and the men who are related to them. To respect women, we simply need to treat them the same way we would want others to treat the women of our family.

Lowering One's Gaze

"Say to the believing men that they restrain their eyes and guard their private parts. That is purer for them. Surely Allah is well aware of what they do." 24:31

The Holy Qur'an has commanded believers to lower their gaze. The wisdom of this teaching is to save us from the negative consequences that result from openly looking at women.

Our ability to perceive and appreciate the physical beauty of an object decreases as familiarity with that object increases. For example, if we find a new phone or shoes that we see through a store window to be beautiful, we will like the way it looks most when we first see it. The more we see it, the more we become familiar with it, and its beauty in our eyes slowly starts decreasing. When we have bought it and see it everyday, the fascination with it begins to fade as our familiarity with its appearance causes the mystery and novelty of its beauty to disappear. After a few years of owning it, even if it is in exactly the same physical condition as it was when we first saw it, we will still not find it as beautiful and will want a new or different one. Oscar Wilde said, "Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months". We find it less beautiful not because its appearance has changed but because we are now familiar with it and the effect it has on us has changed. Take cars for example. When people buy a new car they find it beautiful. Then, some get bored with its appearance and start modifying it, buying new rims, and then lowering it. When they see the car now, they find it beautiful again because it looks different and its appearance is new to them, but after some time they again become bored with its appearance, so they buy a body kit and then add a spoiler and find it beautiful again, wondering how they used to find it so fascinating when they first saw it in its original condition. With physical beauty, fascination fades with familiarity and one starts looking for something new and different. This same principle applies when we only appreciate a human being as a physical object. When men objectify women and look at them only for their physical beauty, their fascination with that beauty begins to fade with familiarity.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] described[5] how there is a difference in how we see the beauty of Allah Almighty and the beauty of human beings. He explains that when we love Allah Almighty, we first see His *Ihsan* first and then we see His *Husn*. We first see the favors that Allah Almighty does for us, and then when we reflect on those favors, we begin to see His beauty which exists as the source of those favors. However, for humans it is the opposite. When we first see someone, we only see their *Husn*, their beauty, but we do not know them. Only afterwards do we become acquainted with their *Ihsan*, their qualities and personality. The purpose of the *ihsan* of Allah Almighty is to ultimately lead us to His *Husn*. If a person sees the favors of Allah Almighty and never reflects on His beauty, then he has not benefited from the favors of God at all and will remain trapped in this stage, looking for greater and greater miracles but not progressing in love, as the Jews did at the time of Hadhrat Musa[as]. Similarly, the purpose of a person's *husn* is to ultimately lead to their *ihsan*. If we only see a person's beauty and never try to understand their *Ihsan* and good characteristics and personality, then we will not benefit from their *husn* at all and will remained trapped in this stage, looking

for greater and greater beauty but not progressing in love.

As we progress in our love for someone, the appearance of their *husn* begins to fade from our perception until eventually we only see their *ihsan*. Take for example our family members or our close friends. If someone were to ask us how handsome or beautiful a member of our family is, or a close friend is, we would have to take a moment to relook at that person more objectively. We rarely think of how our father or mother looks when someone else meets them for the first time. When we look at our brother or friend, what we see is the person we know and the result of the sum total of all our experiences with them. Thus, the more we get to know someone, the more their physical beauty fades from our perception, and when we see them, we see the person behind the face, we see the *ihsan* behind the *husn*. Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] said[6] that when a husband has been with his wife happily his entire life, he loves her even though her physical beauty has faded. If one were to take a picture of her and show it to someone else and ask them if they could fall in love with her, they would refuse and say that it is impossible, but her husband still loves her and would give his life for her because although her physical beauty has faded, it has been replaced with companionship. Thus, when *husn* moves on to *ihsan*, we no longer perceive the physical beauty of that person but only see their inner beauty. If we have come to know the evil attributes of someone and despise them, it does not matter how physically beautiful they are, we will be repulsed by the sight of their face. If we have come to know the good attributes of someone and love them, they will become more beautiful in our perception. Thus, we only see the *husn* of people when we first meet them, but as we get to know them, their *ihsan* slowly and involuntarily replaces our perception of their *husn* until their personality is all we see and we have to make a deliberate effort to step back and see their *husn* again.

The purpose of physical beauty is to lead us to learn about the inner beauty of others. However, if men fail to lower their gaze and freely look at the physical beauty of women, they do not progress past *husn* toward *ihsan* but remain trapped at *husn*. As a result, they begin to see women as nothing more than physical objects and their appreciation of their beauty becomes limited. As described earlier, when we appreciate the beauty of a physical object, whatever it is, our fascination with its beauty begins to decline as we become familiar with it. As a result, we look for something that has the novelty to excite our fascination again. When men do not lower their gaze, they look for the fascination of seeing the beauty of a woman, but no matter how beautiful she is, they will eventually become bored with her and search for the fascination of seeing a different woman. As a person continues to look for more and more different things to quench his insatiable thirst for novelty in physical beauty, he starts to get pulled into a vicious cycle.

One clear example of this is the rising popularity of pornography. When men start looking for pornography, they search for the pleasure of seeing things they find beautiful and fascinating. However, when they become accustomed to the novelty of pornography and the physical beauty they are searching for, they start to look for newer and more different things. As a result, they begin searching for more and more strange acts until they get to a point where they are no longer able to appreciate the normal physical beauty of a woman and their perception of beauty has become so deformed that they are only excited and attracted to images of what ordinary people would consider disgusting and heinous acts. The popularity of deviant pornography is a testimony to the ultimate results of this vicious cycle. This state of affairs is an inevitable result of searching for only physical beauty. This same principle applies to the example of looking for fascination in the beauty of cars referred to earlier. Some people start modifying their cars to renew the novelty of its beauty in their eyes. Step by step, they sometimes go so far in adding modifications to it that eventually it looks ridiculous to ordinary people who see it, and it would have looked ridiculous to them as well when they first bought the car and found it beautiful in its original condition, but because their perception has become skewed by slowly looking for new types of novelty in its physical beauty, they genuinely think that their car is beautiful. Similarly, when men look at a woman only for her physical beauty, they eventually become accustomed to it and look for something different, and that search for something different never ends, leaving them more and more dissatisfied with every attempt.

Thus, Allah Almighty has commanded that we observe *Ghadde Basar*, that we lower our gaze. We are permitted to look at the physical beauty and *husn* of our wives because in the context of a marriage a person can progress from seeing her *husn* to seeing her *ihsan*, in the relationship of a marriage, the appreciation of physical beauty of one's wife leads to the appreciation of her qualities and *ihsan*. However, when a person looks openly at the physical beauty of women who he sees around him, or on TV or online, that beauty cannot lead him towards the higher beauty of *ihsan*, and since appreciation of *husn* can not move upwards, it become trapped and leads him downwards into a vicious cycle in which his perception of beauty becomes more and more disfigured, where he become more and more thirsty for greater fascination and novelty but is never satisfied. Then, because of ones failure to observe *Ghadde Basar*, a man becomes less and less capable of finding his own wife physically beautiful and looks for pleasure elsewhere. Thus, failure to observe *Ghadde Basar* ultimately leads to frustration and disappointment.

The Holy Prophet[saw] said, "The adultery of the eyes is the sight (to gaze at a forbidden thing)"[7]

The Promised Messiah[as] has said, "since the natural condition of man, which is the source of his appetites, and from which he cannot depart without a complete change in himself, is such that his passions are bound to be roused when they are confronted with the occasion and opportunity for indulging in such vice, God Almighty has, therefore, not instructed us that we may freely look at women outside the prohibited category, and we may contemplate their beauty and observe all their movements in dance, etc., but that we should do so with pure looks. Nor have we been instructed to listen to the singing of these women and to lend ear to the tales of their beauty, but with pure intent. Instead we have been positively prohibited from looking at their beauty, whether with pure intent or otherwise, or listening to their musical voices or relating descriptions of their beauty, whether with pure intent or otherwise. We have been directed to eschew all this as we eschew carrion, lest we stumble due to our unlawful glances. As God Almighty desires that our eyes and hearts and all our limbs and our susceptibilities should remain pure, He has furnished us with this excellent teaching. There can be no doubt that lack of restraint causes missteps. If we place soft bread before a hungry dog, it will be vain to hope that the dog will pay no attention to it. Thus God Almighty desired that human faculties should not be provided with any occasion for secret functioning and should not be confronted with anything that might incite dangerous tendencies...

Remember, in Arabic *Ghadd-e-Basar* means to restrain oneself from casting even a cursory glance at the wrong place, while at the same time seeing things which are permissible. It does not behoove a pious person, who desires to keep his heart pure, that he should lift his eyes in an unbridled manner like a beast. It is necessary for such a person to cultivate the habit of *Ghadd-e-Basar* in his social life. This is a blessed habit through which a person's natural impulses are transferred into a high moral condition without adversely affecting his social needs. This is the quality which, in Islam, is called *Ihsan* or chastity."[8]

Action Items

Dressing Modestly

- Dress in a way that does not show off wealth.
- Avoid dressing in ways that are feminine

Respecting Women and Avoiding Interaction and Relations with Women

- Give women the same respect we expect others to give to the women of our family.
- Empathize

Lowering One's Gaze

- Objectifying beauty leads to becoming fickle
- Becoming fickle leads to objectifying new beauty and again becoming fickle – vicious cycle
- Lowering gaze is solution

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AVOIDING THE DRUG CULTURE: THE ISLAMIC SOLUTION

Bilal Rana

وَإِذْ وَعَدْنَا مُوسَىٰ أَرْبَعِينَ لَيْلَةً ثُمَّ اتَّخَذْتُمُ الْعِجْلَ مِن بَعْدِهِ وَأَنتُمْ ظَالِمُونَ ﴿٥٢﴾

There is no beast in the animal kingdom quite like the cow. All over the world, cattle is at once a source of meat, dairy, leather. It ploughs fields … Even it's excretions have uses. In all cultures and in every civilization – whether high or low – the calf is used to solve so many of our problems.

Our heavy reliance on them, in fact, has even given way to divinity. Not just Hindus, but Ancient Greeks, Mesopotamians, Zoroastrians, Egyptians and Jews have all succumbed to cow or calf worship. 'Holy cow' is a popular catch phrase that traces its origin to this very tendency.

The verse I opened with translates as follows:

> And remember the time when We made Moses a promise of forty nights; then you took the calf to worship in his absence and you were transgressors. (*Surah Al-Baqarah*, verse 52)

This verse comes from the longest chapter of the Qur'an, according to Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] is named *Surah al-Baqara* (The Cow) because it symbolizes an important incident in the life of the Jewish nation, when Moses climbed the mountain, leaving the Jews behind who gave into the peer pressures of the culture that prevailed. They melted their ornaments down, and made a calf to worship.

Today's idols aren't always made with wood, stone, or precious metals. Anything which promises you salvation – to remove pain and give you joy and peace – but doesn't, is like an idol. The topic of my speech is Avoiding the Drug Culture. The problem of drugs and alcohol has been called the greatest tragedy of our nation.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] while commenting on his *Surah* says that while nations fall on account of manifest shirk (idolatry), hidden shirk is easily overlooked and the more dangerous of the two, spiritually ruining nations that do not properly guard against it.

Drugs and alcohol are no more powerful before Allah than a man-mad calf for worship. But man becomes a slave of the environment – his culture ("Group-think"). This is particularly true of a people who suffer from an inferiority complex, much like the subjugated Jews of Egypt. They quickly gave into the manners and customs of their day.

If you're born here and you think that gives you a full advantage in helping your children avoid the drug culture, you're wrong. Because culture evolves – it changes. Today's kids aren't growing up in the same culture you grew up in. Growing marijuana has become such an advanced art that, there's 5 times more THC in today's pot than from the 1980s. Today's drugs are more potent than yesterdays.

There was no internet pornography as late as the mid-90s, because there was no internet. Designer drugs like Methamphetamine are extremely addictive for even first time users, the margin of error is much smaller, and are far more common now. Culture evolves and it's constantly mutating. It's smart, has a mind of it's own. Just when you think you have it figured out, it mutates so as to present a new challenge. So what happened 20 years ago is not what's happening today. You may help your children navigate the culture in some ways, but times have changed – culture evolves, our idols evolve. It doesn't matter if you were born here or not. In that way we are ALL cultural immigrants to this country. Culture evolves, and it often strikes from where you least expect it.

For example, your children will not be introduced to drugs by strangers. They will be introduced to drugs by their friends. And you can never tell which friends are the ones that will do that. It was *Samiri,* according to the Holy Qur'an, who gave them the idea of the golden calf. Not a stranger, someone in your own inner circle. In other words, it doesn't have to be

a Bob. It could be a Muhammad, a Bilal, or an Asif.

It's not only popular kids and bad students. It's A students who do it to relieve stress. Or they'll get their hands on Adderall out of pressure to perform. Alcohol consumption is booming in Muslim countries, and has become a staple among upper and middle class Pakistanis. The Holy Prophet[saw] said that: *You will recognize the Latter Days by the rise in alcohol use* (*Sahih Muslim*). The kids you'd think don't and won't, can and are – they're good at hiding. They're very good at living two separate lives – one with their friends, one on the weekends at the mosque.

Just because your child is with another Muslim or another Ahmadi, doesn't mean they're doing *Salat*. Even Moses was astonished when he came down the mountain. Parents, come off your mountains. Our *Jama'at* work, our attendance at this *Jalsa* – these are like lofty mountains for us. But don't turn those lofty mountains into a refuge of denial.

My father never fell asleep until I came home. It didn't matter if I was at the mosque and I was serving as the *Qaid*. He didn't keep me from going out, but he never let himself sleep either.

Children, there is more out there for you. There's more to your life. Do you actually think getting high compares to the peace you find a loving marriage? In raising sons and daughters? If you don't stop now, those blessings in life won't happen.

It will all come back to bite you. It's not a question of if, but when. If you want a preview, just look at the before and after pictures of meth addicts. Look at their faces, they look like zombies. There's nothing left for them but the mercy of Allah. It tells you the hell they've gone through. I've seen and worked with withdrawing addicts. No one who tries drugs out of curiosity ever thinks they will become addicted.

Being a religious Muslim is not popular. I understand that. Your names are hard to pronounce, they sound funny. You might dress different, you don't get to show other people how beautiful you are. Recall that the Israelites lived in a foreign land too – Egypt, under bondage.

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] elaborated in his commentary that, worshipping calves was not an Israelite custom. It was the Egyptian way. They acquired it living amongst them. Because of their inferiority complex, they copied their way of life. And when Moses wasn't looking, they made their move.

The calf worship was more dangerous a trial to the survival of Israelite nation than even the Pharaoh's oppression. Because, Hazoor argued, that persecution actually strengthens your solidarity, but hidden idolatry strikes at the very insides of a community.

So can you recognize a calf when you see it? When you go to college, Moses[as] isn't there – what do do? You're at a restaurant, your friends are ordering drinks, and they offer you a golden calf. What do you do?

Moses[as] felt like he gave them all the truth they needed. But when he leaves your company, will you lose faith in your God, and begin looking for golden calves?

Take caution in business as well. The Holy Prophet[aaw] was once given wine as a gift by a companion. He[saw] told him, 'Don't you know this has been forbidden?' He replied, '*No*'. When another companion told him he should sell it, the Holy Prophet[saw] told him not to sell it, that is forbidden too. Rather, he said, 'He should dump it out.' (*Hadith*)

The Promised Messiah[as] also warned us, not only about alcohol, but narcotics and marijuana as well. He says:

'O ye wise ones! Restrain yourselves and give up all intemperance. Refrain from the use fo all intoxicants. Liquor is not the only thing that is destructive for humans, but Opium, Ganja, Hemp, Bhung, Palm-wine and every type of intoxicant which becomes a habit, affects the brain, and ultimately causes ruin. Keep away from all of these. I cannot understand why you should use such things through the evil of which thousands of addicts like you depart from this life every year, and the torment of the hereafter is in addition." (Essence of Islam, Vol. IV, p. 173)

Unfortunately, peer conformity is most pronounced in the youth culture. For a youth of this country, it's not a surprise to me he tried drugs. It's a surprise he hasn't. It's not a

surprise if a child of this culture wants to wear a skirt. It's a surprise if she doesn't. If they don't succumb to the calf, we think "Good. You weren't supposed to."

But I'm telling you the odds are against them. Statistically, they ARE supposed to. 4 out 5 kids will have used drugs by the time they're 18. Our children are overcoming HUGE odds. Forget about how many competitions your child wins at *Ijtema*.

There is another contest he faces on a daily basis -- and the consequences are real and serious. A *Khadim* once told me he was the only one on his entire High School football team that didn't smoke weed. That's the awesome power of Group -think. And it can come early. I was in middle school when I was first approached. My friend offered me a hit of acid for $5 at lunch time. I was 13 years old.

And parents, those teenage years are too late. By then your child is going through a complex phase where he or she is not interested in listening to you. You have to get to them when they're really young, the single digit years.

Because during the drug experimentation years that wall is going to go up and there's nothing you can do anymore. You had your chance when the wall was down – when they were begging to be talked to, but you couldn't be bothered. Don't sleep on those single digit years, those are the best years. Don't babysit them with Disney Channel and Nickelodeon. The Holy Prophett[saw] said: Every child is born with good-nature. It's their parents that set the direction of their beliefs. So nourish them will proper values. So when they begin to enter society, they don't bow to golden calves.

Children, your parents love you, whether they express it or not. They may not necessarily go what you go through, they may not even be perfect parents. But that doesn't mean they don't genuinely love you. And parents, beneath that tough teenage veneer, your children still crave safety and your approval. Don't get tempted into saying hurtful words to your children.

Still, some of you may feel like you need more help than your family can provide. Always seek help, you can come to me, and if it becomes an addiction, you don't need counseling, you need medicine.

But never despair. Remember, Allah is Forgiving. We all fall down. Don't buy into the Satanic whispers that you can't get back up, that you can't be forgiven and that you can't change. We all fall down.

The question is, 'Is Islam the solution' to our drug culture? Is reformation even possible? If you find yourself succumbing to the calf, what do you do? Recall the *Hadith* that the streets of Mecca were running with alcohol. There were companions who had fallen into despair, but Islam lifted them out. And it can lift you out too. You don't have to look back 14 centuries. Brother Muzaffar Zafar, our late *Naib Ameer*, would share how he had fallen pray to this kind of idol, but reclaimed his life through Ahmadiyyat, became a world traveler, founded the most successful drug rehab program in the entire state of Ohio. He earned his doctorate and died serving as our *Naib Ameer*. Re-invent yourself. Become a Muzzafar Zafar, there's nobody stopping you. You have everything he had at his disposal.

Just ask yourself, How do you feel when you miss your drugs? Do you like that? Are you fed up? Have you had enough? Because you have to get fed up. How does it feel when that glass or that blunt touches your lips? Do you feel like noble people? Do you feel dignified? How does it feel ... bowing to the calf? Do you feel like a man?

You're an Ahmadi Muslim. You are men with rank. You're a mounted soldier, with a glorious destiny, and it doesn't not befit a knight to take off his armor.

The scary thing about drug culture is that it comes disguised as a legal form as well. Simple emotional pain has become an illness. You tell a doctor you're depressed and as early as your first visit, they could put you on a pill. Our drug-seeking culture even puts dogs on anti-depressants. Don't get me wrong, anti-depressants have their benefit and I've prescribed them as well, but they can be dangerous. Esp. when used as an escape for soul searching, you don't need a substance to feel like you are in control of your life.

And why do we always have to be happy anyway? Do we really need a medication to fix us? What's wrong with highs and lows? Isn't that what life's about? When something bad happens, we cry "Why me?" But when something good happens, do

you ask the same question? Do you ask, "Why me? ... Why did this good happen to me?"

The truth is, it's in making peace with sadness that you find its real cure. In one of lines of poetry written by the Promised Messiah[as] he says:

"O Love, you have made the wound and the ointment alike on the path to the Beloved." [Or, *O Love, you have made my pain a joy on the path to the Beloved"*] It's a deeply philosophical point, but your sadness and your joy are more alike than you know. When patience is born for Allah's sake, you can find peace in the very kernel of sadness.

My father used to say "You know that I don't want you to do any of these things, but ultimately it's going to be your decision whether or not you chose to do them." That sense of responsibility and accountability helped me. It made me feel empowered, like my young manhood was being respected, and it came at a time when I really needed that. Be aware when your child may have reached this stage, because it can come earlier than you want it to come. If you treat young adults like adults, they will behave like adults. But if you treat and speak to them like children, they will tend to behave like children.

Alcohol is a sin in Islam, but despite that, the Promised Messiah[as] wrote:

" *My way is such that if I had found one of my friends lying drunk on the street, I would not hesitate to lift him up and take him to his home even if a large crowd were watching."*

(Malfoozat, Vol 1, pg 311)

To *Jama'at* office holders, to the *Majlis*, when we see the weakness of a brother we pick them up and support them. We help them move beyond their struggle.

You may not do drugs, but what's your vice? What's your "weed"? What's your idol, your statue? Is it the luxury car you bought on credit? Or it your love for desserts? Because deep down it's all the same reason – to fill an emptiness. These are golden calves for us.

The companions of the Holy Prophet[saw] were mocked for being crude and simple. But see what the Holy Prophet[saw] and what Allah saw in those people. See what you had been missing before. Some of the least eloquent in speech, are the best in deeds. Some of the blackest faces give off the most light. But can you see that?

Seeing that is the way of prophets. If you want to reform people, learn to touch their heart. And if you want to touch people's hearts, then let your hearts be touched by them. Because you cannot touch others heart, unless your own heart is being touched.

May Allah enable us to do so, *Ameen.*

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PAY ZAKAT

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HADITH

Hadhrat Ikrash bin Dhuwaib[ra] relates that Banu Murrah bin Ubaid sent me with the charity collections of their property to the Messenger[saw] of Alla-h. I came to him[sa] in Medina and found him[saw] sitting in the company of *Ansar* and *Muhajirin*. He[saw] held my hand and took me to the house of Hadhrat Umm Salamah[ra]. He[saw] asked if there is anything to eat. We were given a pot with a lot of broth and chunks of meat. We started eating from the dish. My hands roamed along the sides of the dish, while the Messenger[saw] of Allah ate from the front. He[sa] held my right hand with his left hand and said: "O Ikrash! Eat from one place as all the food is the same. Then a large tray full of different kinds of dates or fresh dates was given to us. I started to eat from the front. However, the hand of the Messenger[saw] of Alla-h wandered in the tray and said: 'O Ikrash! Eat from wherever you like as these are of different varieties.' Then we were given water. The Messenger[saw] of Allah washed his hands and rubbed using his wet hands his face, head and arms and said: 'O 'Ikrash! This is the ablution (after eating) for a thing cooked on fire.' "

(Tirmidhi abwabul at'imah bab ma ja fittasmiyyash alattu'am)

Hadhrat Ibn Abbas[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "Blessings descend upon food in its middle, so eat from the sides of the vessel and do not eat from its middle."

(Tirmidhi kitabul at'imah bab karahiyah min wasatattu'am, p 3/2)

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RAISING A RIGHTEOUS GENERATION- A FATHERS ROLE

Jalal A. Latif

When I have an opportunity to address the young people, I try to say something they might remember. I lived through what you are now going through. As you manage to go about growing up, especially you young folks whose parents grew up in a different culture. And you fathers who grew up outside of the USA please pay attention to what I am saying because if your children are going to American schools and daily interacting with non Ahmadi school mates and neighbors, it just might surprise you to know what they are confronted with.

I am going to give you a gist of what I did when I found my wife and I raising a Muslim family as I had just taken *Bai'at* into the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam. Since I was asked to deliver this topic I want to present this very important subject so everyone could benefit. I think most of you here know me and know who my children are. They are all grown men and woman and all functioning in the *Jama'at* after growing up in America. If they can do it all of us should be able to do it.

Your children are being confronted with drugs, alcohol, pornography, sex, homo sexuality, obscene language, and whatever else this irreligious society can throw at them. If we want to keep this sort of evil influence out of our community and our homes we have start at the earliest time in their lives. So much time is spent by our children out side of the home and community due to the school and after school curriculum. So it is here at this period where we must do all we can possibly do to fortify them with the tools they will need to combat the influence of the evil that pervades this society we are living in. And I might add here this problem is not just unique to western world, but the tentacles of this evil has crept into all regions of the world. It is the monumental task of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community, that is us brothers and sisters, we who have now the responsibility of saving the world, to bring about the renaissance of True Islam through the community of the Promised Messiah, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad Qadiani[as] in these days under the leadership of the 5th successor Khalifatul Masih, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad[aba]. This community is the last hope for the world! There is no other program by any group, or organization, be it secular or religious that can save us and our children from falling into the abyss of a satanic life.

I want to also focus my presentation on the young people who are about to be married, recently married or have just started having children born into their families. We have a clear example in what a father should do in the Holy Qur'an. In Ch. 37:101 we have Prophet Abraham[as] praying:

"My Lord, grant me a righteous son" .

The first and foremost thing we should do is pray. Nothing we attempt to do should begin without asking Almighty God for His help. in the reference Almighty God Allah relates the story of the prophet Luqman. *Sura Luqman*: Verses 14 and 18-20; And remember when Luqman said to his son while exhorting him, O my dear son! Associate not partners with Allah. Surely, associating partners with Allah is a grievous wrong.

O my dear son! Observe prayer, and enjoin good and forbid evil and endure patiently whatever may befall thee. Surely, this is a matter of high resolve.

And turn not thy cheek away from men in pride, nor walk in the earth haughtily; surely Allah loves not any arrogant boaster.

And walk thou at a moderate pace and lower thy voice; verily the most disagreeable of voices is the braying of the ass.

You young men must recognize that the fundamental duty of a man as head of the household is to care for all dependents and specifically to nurture and train the children to become good law abiding citizens and servants of God. You will have to, and you must, share the parenting skills necessary in these

times, with your wife. Such skills as communication, time management, appropriate discipline, etc. to achieve this goal. It is most important that you and your wife are on the same page with this and agree to how this will be implemented. That is why any young man who I've talked to will tell you the first thing I tell them as a new husband is to make every effort to make your wife your best friend. You have to win her trust and love. She has to be able to believe that she has nothing to fear except God. She has to be safe. When my wife and I talk about how All Praise and Thanks is to Almighty God for us to have been able to raise a family in Islam at the time we were learning Islam our selves. She never fails to say "It is because you established prayer in the home". Brothers and sisters my wife and I made a lot of mistakes learning and teaching Islam but when I think of the tears we shed praying for these children. Still shed! My wife has soaked Prayer rugs. I know it is prayers that Almighty God Allah has answered is what is really responsible for whatever successes I might have had or whatever anybody thinks I might have had and that I of all people should give a speech at *Jalsa* on a topic as important as this. So you must heed the advice given to you by Hazoor. This MUST be adhered to. That is the first and foremost action you must take. Without prayer your spiritual goals cannot be reached. The Holy Prophet[saw] had already prophesized that in the latter days you will not be able fight the *Dajjal*. No matter what battle field you are on. We have to understand this fact. It is the prayers. It is the prayers. The Promised Messiah[as] says in Essence of Islam Vol. III, "I pray for my children and require them to follow a broad set of rules of behavior and no more. Beyond this I put my full trust in Allah Almighty in the confidence that the seed of good fortune inherent in each of them will flower at its proper time".

Since 1972 when I entered the Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam the one thing I think I heard the most was "you have to say your Prayers. Prayer is the only weapon we have to fight the forces of evil". What we hear the most from our beloved Hazoor in practically every sermon is 'increase your worship, self analyze yourself, improve your spirituality through your prayers. Join the congregational *Salat,* attend the mosque, strive to become righteous". Each *Khalifa* I have heard speak has stressed this and I believed them. We've all heard this. Now today I'm given 20 minutes to say something that will inspire you that has been stressed by the 3 *Khulafa,* for over the 40 years I've been an Ahmadi, every Friday in an hour long *Khutba.*

Another important thing is the skill of communications. If you can't communicate with your children how will they hear you? You have to talk to them sometimes on their level. You have to believe in what you're doing. You can't ask them to do something that you aren't doing when it comes to the religion. I think we've heard this in speeches many times over the years. Right? Well I believed it. I worked in New York City and lived in New Jersey so my wife was left to deal with the children. She didn't go to work outside the home. She told me she never wanted anything more than she wanted to be a mother. She explained to the kids that 'when you hear me call you, you must come home right away. Because *Aba* is away in New York and I might need you and it may be time for our prayers. So you must come right away'. Some time all their friends would come with them and sit until they all finished their prayers. When they became of the age that it was mandatory to pray one of the kids said, "so and so friend said they don't have to make *Fajr* because they go to school. So I asked him "you want to go live with them or you want to live here"? He thought about that and decided we have too much fun here so I guess I'll stay. Later one of my sons told me once "Aba what I appreciated most in you is I could see you were consistent in your practice so I believed you. We have heard the *Hadith* that "Paradise lies at the feet of the mother' But there is also the saying that the fathers prayers are the gate to paradise' This says that both the parents prayers are essential for the upbringing of children. I took my kids everywhere we went. Camping trips, vacations, every *Jalsa, Khuddam Ijtema's.* Rahim told me one time just a few years ago 'Aba, you're my best friend'. I never forgot that. I think that is a great accomplishment on my part as a father. You can't always be laying down the law. You want to be able to have fun with your kids. They should be comfortable with you and you with them. You don't have to forgo discipline to have fun if it is all done with love your kids will love being with you and believe what you say.

Another important point for everyone in the family, especially the

husband/father and wife/mother, is reading the Ahmadiyya literature. I always mention that everyone should have the five volume Qur'an and commentary in their home along with the now 5 volumes of *Essence of Islam.* This is essential reading as far as I am concerned. Everything you can find in the language you can read and understand that the Promised Messiah[as] wrote you must read. All of the *Jama'at* literature you should read but my opinion is these things is what I feel is what grounded me and my family in Ahmadiyyat in Islam.

The book the *Way of the Seekers* is an important book to refer to for guidance on raising children we referred to it often. There is the chapter in which the 2nd *Khalifa* Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] mentions the moral training of the child. Just the point alone, that a child should be fed at fixed hours. It makes for breeding the habit of self control and saves the child from a number of evils. The child should be given a variety of foods. Meats, vegetables and fruits for dietary habits affect morals and a variety of foods is necessary for a variety of morals.' Making schedules puts structure in your days so children see organization in their lives. All of the second *Khalifa's* works is a must also. This is the things we did and tried to instill in our children. If you can get a foundation like this or something similar by the time the children reach the age of reasoning, you will have done all you can do. You then have to depend on your prayers. Your prayers and the prayers of The *Khalifa* and all the spiritual elders of the community, who you can approach, will help. In the recent *Khutbas* of Hazoor he has been stressing to step up your pursuit of raising your standard of righteous. (*Hadith*) Ibn Umar relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said " Everyone of you is a steward and is accountable for that which is committed to his charge. A man is a steward in respect of his household, a woman is a steward in respect in of her husband's house and his children. Thus everyone is a steward and is accountable for that which is committed to his charge. (Bukhari and Muslim)

We have to do this, especially you who will soon be influencing young peoples' lives. I had the good fortune to have come into Ahmadiyyat at a time when there were a few American brothers in the New York *Jama'at* and the North East Coast area of the USA who where avid readers and seekers of knowledge. They were serious about passing on their knowledge and practices of gaining knowledge to us new converts. There was also a few brothers from Pakistan who frequented the mission house or were staying there, who were learned in Islam and Ahmadiyyat. I am making this reference to this period of my life at this time because it was a big influence on my life later on as I developed a love for Ahmadiyyat through reading everything I could get my hands on of Ahmadiyya literature. Our *Khuddam* meetings were actually study groups. We discussed the books we read that were suggested by the brothers and it was just fascinating to me to hear these people explain so much that I had never heard before. It seemed the more I read the more I understood how ignorant I was. I believed what I was reading and what these brothers were explaining. We had *Khuddam* meetings twice a week in those days. We wanted to be in each other's company at the mission house. The meeting started at 7:30pm Saturday and Monday evenings and lasted to midnight most times. When the children started coming I had something to tell my family and a practice they could see in me and my wife. You have to be concerned with what you are influencing your children with. They are watching you. Very closely they are watching. Your period of the most influence, I believe, is birth to up to 7-10 years old. If you haven't taught your children the prayers and their importance, or the manners and cleanliness and modesty, and respect for the *Jama'at* and *Khilafat* how much influence do you think you'll have after they reach 12 and 13 years old and have been in schools with the non Muslim neighbors and exposed to the philosophy of this super liberal society of the *Dajjal*?

Once they reach 12 or 13 they are who they will be. If they appear to get lost in the world and they have you as a role model that they can believe in, if you don't give up on them, and keep the channels of communications open, there is the chance they will see that there is nothing out there in the world that is better than Ahmadiyyat in Islam.

I have been asked a number of times over the years for some advice on raising children and I try to say something that I think will make a real impression. But recently in California one of my favorite nephews

who is raising a young family now and is close to all my children, said "Uncle Jalal, please pray the prayers for my children you prayed for yours. I think about that often now and I say 'He understands it is all about the prayers. He didn't ask me for advice or what he should do, etc. Everyone's situation is unique. What worked for me might not exactly work for you. One thing is for certain though, Allah is Constant and Never Changes and is Never Absent. He answers the prayers of the supplicant when he prays to Me.

I'll close here with another quote of The Promised Messiah from *Malfoozat* Vol. 2 p4: I wish that, instead of punishing children, parents would have recourse to prayer, and should make it a habit to supplicate earnestly for their children; for supplications of parents on behalf of their children meet with special acceptance."

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HADITH

Hadhrat Jabalah bin Suhaim[ra] relates: "During the rule of 'Abdulla -h bin Zubair, we were stuck with famine one year, and he gave us dates. Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar[ra] passed by us while we were eating. He said: 'Do not eat two dates together, for the Holy Prophet[saw] prohibited the consumption of two dates together, except when one seeks the permission of his companion.' "

(Bukhari kitabul at'imah bab al-qiran fittamar, p 819/2, Muslim)

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AHMADIYYAT IN SOOBA K P K.

SECOND EDITION IN PROGRESS

M. Ajmal Shahid

The first edition of AHMADIYYAT KA NAFOOZ---SOOBA KPK MAIN Was published last year. In this publication we tried to trace the gradual progress of AHMADIYYAT in the frontier part of Pakistan ,which is now named KHEBAR PUKHTOON KHAH. It was huge task but by the grace of *Allah Taala* ,we were able to publish the first edition. It is very much appreciated by all and sundry and termed as encyclopedia of the history of AHMADIYYAT in this region.

As we all know the work of history cannot be fully justified and there is always need of improvement . After the publication of the book We received some feed back and some corrections and additions to be included in the next edition. Some have promised but we are still waiting their valuable contributions. As now the second edition is in progress, I wish to appeal the residents of that province and particularly of Hazara district to please furnish us the information which are not covered in the first edition. Please send your contributions to :

Email (1) Fmkhans2006@yahoo.ca
(2) Safiullah Khan: TombofJesus@gmail.com
(3) Sdaslam@hotmail.com
(4) homeocare@yahoo.com

MAIL. M. Ajmal Shahid
927 ASHTON ROAD , BENSALEM PA. 19020

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SAD DEMISE

Mohtrama Farida Nusrat Mahmood Sahiba, widow of *Mohtram* Nusrat Mahmood Shaheed Sahib passed away in Long Island New York.

اِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَ اِنَّآ اِلَيْهِ رٰجِعُوْنَ

She was sister of Rafi Ahmed, Ashfaq Ahmed and Hamid Ahmed Sahib of Long Island and niece of *Mohtram* Dr. Imtiaz Chaudhary Sahib Of New Jersey. Her Funeral Prayer took place at Baituz Zafar Mosque, Queens and her burial took place on August 6th. 2013. It is requested that please pray that God Almighty grants her lofty place in Heaven. *Ameen*

M. A. Janjua

COMPANIONS WHO FOUND GOD IN YOUTH

Maulana Azhar Haneef

Fifty years ago, on Sept 2, 1963, Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad [ra] the son of the Promised Messiah[as] known as *Qamarul Ambiya* (the moon of the prophets) passed away. It was a moment for reflection. At that time, Ch. Sir Zafrulla Khan[ra] had the following to say:

"The death of Sahibzada Mirza Bashir Ahmad sahib (ra)...has created a great void. It is also a forcible reminder that the second generation of the Ahmadiyya Movement is drawing to its close. The first generation ended with the death of Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih I[ra] in 1914. The old order is coming to an end and the new order, which has been struggling to be born, is now going to take over the direction of affairs. We should carry out a sincere and vigorous stocktaking so as to prepare ourselves for the passing of one epoch and the flowering of the next. In one sense, the birth of the Movement itself was the opening of a new era: the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. The intervening period has been one of nurture and maturing and of gradually coming of age.

Where do we stand today? [His primary target audience was *Jama'ats* in the West –He was asking the question to us, 'Where do we stand today?']

He then assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the *Jama'at* and said:

Fifty years ago, we were few in numbers and poor in material resources, but we were full of vigor and rich in moral and spiritual values. Therein lay our strength. That strength constituted the justification for our high hopes. The generation that was then in the course of passing out could transfer its responsibilities with confidence to those upon whose shoulders they were about to fall. Is that the situation today also? If the true answer to this question can be a clear and resounding affirmative, we have nothing to fear. If this is not the true answer, we must reflect deeply, prayerfully and in utter sincerity how to improve the situation. We must remind ourselves of the Divine Law that all Divine promises demand for their fulfillment the fullest and most sincere response from those in whom and through whom those promises have to find their fulfillment. The first century of Islam was a shining and conclusive illustration."

The first century of Islam was the golden era of the *Sahaba,* the companions of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw], his Rightly Guided Successors and their immediate followers. The Holy Prophet[saw] called this the best generation. What is remarkable about that generation is that we see numerous examples of youth who accepted Islam and became dedicated servants and devout worshippers of God.

Some of these youth were very young in age and this gave tremendous hope that Islam had a bright and glorious future ahead for generations to come.

One of the first males to accept him was his 10 year old cousin, Ali bin Abi Talib. Let's recall what happened some time later when the Holy Prophet invited his relatives to a meal. He invited them to Islam and asked who would befriend and help him in the task of delivering the message of God to their people. Everyone remained dead silent except for Ali who said:

"O Messenger of Allah, although I am the youngest and weakest of all those present here, I shall support you."

I'd like the youth sitting here today to think about how faith entered that young boy's heart and how bravely he committed to serving God and His Messenger. Don't ever think that youth is just a time for fun and games and that religion is something for those who are old and grey. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) said:

"*Allah loves the youth who pass their youth in obedience to Him,*" and "*Allah loves the youth who repents.*"

He also mentioned that on the Day of Judgment, everyone will be asked about his youth, and that one of the seven people over whom Allah will cast the shade of His Mercy is the youth who grew up worshipping God.

At the age of 19, upon the demise of the Promised Messiah[as], Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad[ra] made a similar pledge to serve God. He said:

Even if all the people leave you and I am left alone I would stand by you and would face all opposition to and onslaughts on your Mission."

Both of these noble youths proved true to their pledges, and both eventually became *Khalifas* of the prophet of their time. These are the kind of pledges and proclamations we hope and pray that Ahmadi youth will continue to offer and give each generation assurance that faith is alive and well. The experience of faith starts when you are young. Try to recognize the signs. The first time a *Khalifa* of the *Jama'at* came to the USA was in 1976. It was Hadhrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad, Khaliftul Masih III[rh]. In his closing address of the Jalsa that year, he said:

"Even a child, an Ahmadi child I mean, has a real, living connection with his Creator...I asked children, 'Tell me any true dreams you have seen', and quite a few stood up and said, 'I have seen a true dream.' A child of eight, ten or twelve seeing dreams which came true...things which were told to them by Allah in a language which a small child with an undeveloped mind understands. Something concerning his buffalo that a male calf would be born and it so happened. So the living connection with our Creator in our actual life starts from the very beginning during childhood. For this you are not required to wait until you get to the age of forty, fifty, sixty and after a long struggle and very long prayers. This is the age in which man can cultivate a living connection with one's Creator."

As I said, in the first century of Islam there were numerous examples of youth who recognized these signs and joined the fold of Islam. For instance, here is a partial list of youth who accepted Islam at an early age:

1. Abdullah bin Umar and Ubaida bin al-Jarrah at age 13.
2. Uqba bin Amir at 14.
3. Jabir bin Abdullah and Zayd bin Harith at 15.
4. Abdullah bin Mas'ud, Khabbab bin al-Arat and Zubair bin Awwam at 16.
5. Talha bin Ubaidullah, Abdur Rahman bin Auf, Al-Arqam bin Abil-Arqam, Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas and Asma bint Abu Bakr at 17
6. Muaz bin Jabel and Musayb bin Umair at 18
7. Abu Musa al-Ash'ari at 19
8. Ja'afar bin Abi Talib at 22. He led the delegation of Muslims who migrated to Abyssinia and effectively conveyed the message to the King and secured asylum.
9. Uthman bin Huwairis, Hadhrat Uthman bin Affan, Abu Ubaida, Abu Huraira and Hadhrat Umar between 25-31. Not as young as the others but still within the prime of their lives.

These were not youth who accepted faith then sat passively and sheepishly to one side waiting for the elders to establish the kingdom of God on earth. They boldly professed faith and actively participated in every part of the mission to spread Islam in Arabia no matter the obstacles or opposition. Like the youth who supported prophet Musa[as], they found God and nothing and no one could deter them. Allah says:

فَمَآ اٰمَنَ لِمُوْسٰٓى اِلَّا ذُرِّيَّةٌ مِّنْ قَوْمِهٖ
عَلٰى خَوْفٍ مِّنْ فِرْعَوْنَ وَمَلَا۟ئِهِمْ اَنْ
يَّفْتِنَهُمْ ۭ وَاِنَّ فِرْعَوْنَ لَعَالٍ فِي الْاَرْضِ ۚ

*"None obeyed Moses save some **youths** from among his people, because of the fear of Pharaoh and their chiefs, lest he should persecute them."* (10:84)

Read the stories of the early companions. You will be amazed at what youth can do! The question again is **'Where do we stand today?'** Are we as elders inspiring, nurturing and empowering enough of our youth to cultivate a strong relationship with God and commit their heart, mind and soul to serving faith?

Are you our youth satisfied with just being a part of this movement and making only minimal or meager efforts to tread along the Divine path and spread our message to the people in America? If so, we have truly forgotten not only the history of Islam but the history of our *Jama'at* in USA. Both are stories of youth who found God and served faith.

Last year, when our beloved *Khalifa,* Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad[aba], visited the USA, in one of his sermons he reminded us:

"In USA, there is a large population of African American Ahmadis whose forefathers offered great sacrifices when they accepted Ahmadiyyat and transformed their lives significantly, but moving forward, there

is a need to evaluate whether similar transformations are taking place."

Since so much time has passed and so much of that generation has departed, many here may no longer know the stories of these American forefathers who Hazoor referred to in his sermon and who lived in the first century of Ahmadiyyat here in the USA. We should not forget them for their stories are also inspirational. They are stories of how American youth and young adults found God though Ahmadiyyat and dedicated their lives to serving the mission and spreading the message in this nation. They are the accounts of people such as Bashir Afzal who joined the fold at age 21 and later served as the president of NY *Jama'at* for 30 years, of Khalil Mahmud who embraced Ahmadiyyat at 18 and earned distinction in academic and professional pursuits both here and abroad in Nigeria, and of Muhammad Sadiq. He adopted the name of the first missionary to USA, Mufti Muhammad Sadiq[ra]. He says:

"I was told that the first Muslim missionary to the United States was Mufti Muhammad Sadiq. I liked that name so much that I decided to take it for my own...As a musician, I used to hear people talk about Islām, but everything I heard about this religion, sounded so foolish that I did not care much about it. Then, one day in 1947, a friend gave me a book, "The Life of Muḥammad," I was in tears after reading that book. What hurt me so much was that I wanted to be so much like Muḥammad, peace and blessings of Allāh be on him, but I knew that I could never be like him."

I had no difficulty in recognizing Ahamdiyyat to be the true Islām. The same year, after accepting Aḥmadiyyat, I saw Hadhrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad[ra], the Second Successor to the Promised Messiah[as], in a dream. I saw that I was in Pakistan and I asked some men that I wished to see the Khalifatul-Masih. They said that he was upstairs in his room. When I went to see him, he appeared to be sleeping, but someone told me that he was praying. There was a back door in that room through which I saw Ṭālib Dawūd exiting as I entered the room through the front door."

Umer Bilal Ibrahim:

"I have been elected to several offices in the Ahmadiyya Movement, including local president. However, I do not think that any of these offices was as fulfilling as being a member of Khuddamul Ahmadiyya. This branch in Ahmadiyyat was the answer to all the challenges, cultural and political, of that time. The Khuddām at that time were bustling with young lions and the activities we were involved in kept us always in new ventures. For example, brother Munir Hamid, Bilal Abdus Salam, Nuruddin Abdul-Latif, Jalaluddin Abdul-Latif, Akbar Tshaka, Bilal Sunni Ali, Ahmad Bashir and other members of the Khuddām got together to publish a monthly paper called the The Real Revolution. This paper was edited by brother Munīr Ḥāmid and the title was taken from the book of the Second Khalifa entitled Inqilabi Haqiqi (the Real Revolution). This was our way of combating the publications put out by other groups at that time. It created an excitement among the Khuddām and soon became quite a tool for propagation...The members who were active in Khuddam back then are still active. Some of the members whom we thought were not as active, grew to become active leaders of the Jama'at for the purpose of establishing Aḥmadiyyat, the True Islām, in America."

One of those members he referred to was Brother Munir Hamid. He accepted Islam/Ahmadiyyat at the tender age of 15 and served the *Jama'at* admirably in leadership roles till his last breath. He was the first *Qaid* of *Khuddamul Ahmadiyya* USA, the *Sadr* of Philadelphia *Jama'at* for over thirty years and *Naib Ameer* of USA for over a decade. Everyone remembers him for his warm, loving embrace and his soul stirring speeches on Islam and spirituality. Speaking about his conversion to Islam, he once said:

"As a youth I was into experimenting with different things. Keep in mind, I grew up in an environment in which kids were experimenting with things like alcohol and even drugs. Often times I would hang out with my friends on the street asking for money to buy such things. One day I saw an old friend and asked him for some money. He told me that he wouldn't give the money because I would use it for some illicit purpose, but he would give me something better than money. He gave me a copy of The Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam and told me to read it. He then invited me to attend a meeting in his house to discuss the book. Fearing that I would have to lie, I began

reading the book, and once I picked it up I couldn't stop. I attended the meeting where I met missionary Nurul Haq Anwar and also Muhammad Sadiq. I was very impressed with their knowledge and wanted to accept immediately, but because I was a minor, I was asked to get it signed by my mother, so I took the Bai'at form home to her. She wasn't happy at all. She refused to sign the Bai'at form and tried to convince me that I had made a mistake. Family members would call me to try to convince me to change my attitude. In fact, it got so difficult that I decided to forge my mother's signature, but I was reminded by the missionary that Allah sees all and it wouldn't be worth it."

CONCLUDING PRAYER

"O Allah, make us truthful, brave, obedient and disciplined, and grant us the strength of faith and the will necessary for living according to the Qur'anic teachings, and make all of us, our young and old, men and women and children into your true servants, and guard us against all those weaknesses and frailties which take us from the right path. Create in our hearts your love and the love of our religion, and make us successful in bringing about the revolution that you have declared is your intention and purpose to bring about at the hands of the Promised Messiah." Ameen

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PAY ZAKAT

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JULY 4th 2013 TABLIGH REPORT-MILWAUKEE JAMA'AT

Members of Milwaukee *Jama'at* participated in two parades, one on the Northeast Side and the other in Oak Creek, WI on the South side. Both parades had participation by members of *Ansar, Khuddum, Lajna, Nasirats*, and *Atfal.* T-shirts and flags were purchased and distributed to members who participated. Both were morning parades and began around 9am.

Northeast Side: 16 members participated in this parade. The walk was approximately 1 to 2 miles walking through neighborhoods which as we walked members of the neighborhood blended in. At one juncture the parade was joined by two other parades and ended on Lake Dr or Lake Park which is located near and above Lake Michigan. At the end of the parade the estimate number of people who were there was a thousand. Ice cream cups and water were distributed to the participants by the Administrators of the parades in the park.

Oak Creek, WI: 17 members participated in the parade in the downtown district in Oak Creek, WI. The walk was approximately 2 miles. Participates were: 5 *Khuddam*, 3 *Ansar*, 2 *Lajna*, 5 *Nasirat* and 1 *Tifl*

We had a motorcycle decorated with US flags, a large pickup truck with "Muslim for Loyalty" banners, and flags. Candy was thrown out to the crowds. Approximately 2000 people watched the parade.

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SAD DEMISE

It is informed with a heavy heart that my eldest sister HABIBA GOWHER passed away in Tahir Heart Institute, Rabwah, on September 10, 2013. ***Inna Lillahe wa Inna Alaihe Rajeoon.*** May Allah give her high status in *Jannatul Firdous*, and give patience to the grieved family members. *Ameen*

She has been sick for quite a while in Lahore after a stroke. She was wife of Late Bashir Ahmad Qureshi (younger brother of Professor Sufi Bisharat-ur- Rahman Sahib of T.I. College). She was *Moosia* and served *Lajna Imaillah*, Lahore in various capacities for a long time. She was 80 and is buried in *Behishti-Maqbarah*, Rabwah. She is survived by one son Naeem Ahmad Shaheen, who served in Ghana at Ahmadiyya Secondary School over 20 years (now in Belgium), and 4 daughters. All are married and have their own children. *Alhamdulillah*, all are very devoted workers. They are living in Rabwah, Canada, Germany and U.K..

Three of her younger brothers (Kalimullah Khan, Mujibullah Khan and Khalilullah Khan) and one younger sister (Muniba) are in USA (*Laurel Jama'at*). **Kalimullah Khan:** kalimukhan38@yahoo.com, 301-386-7364

MUHAMMAD[saw] - THE MESSENGER OF PEACE

Maulana Naseem Mahdi, Missionary In Charge and Na'ib Ameer

Transcribed by Mansura B. Minhas

After *Surah Fatiha*, I've recited verse number 22 of *Surah Al-Ahzab* (Chapter 33) of the Holy Qur'an and this is the verse which is written behind me and the translation is also given on the other side.

"Verily you have in the Prophet of Allah an excellent model, for him who fears Allah and the Last Day and who remembers Allah much."

Before I start my presentation, I would like to say that for the members of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, there will be lot of things in my presentation which will be a repetition for them, but I've kept in mind so many honored guests who are, many of them are visiting us first time and perhaps they are first time in a Muslim gathering. So I will be primarily addressing them to highlight some of the points from the Holy Quran and from the life of Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw].

When I came here, I said *Assalamo Alaikum,* peace be on you. The word *As-Salam* is from the Arabic root (in Arabic every word is derived from a three letter root) *Sin Laam Meem* and this root has the meaning of peace. When I say *Assalamo Alaikum*, it means peace be on you and millions of Muslims everyday use this expression when they greet and meet and they say *Assalamo Alaikum* (peace be on you). The word 'Islam' is also derived from this root which means peace and submission. In the Holy Qur'an there are a little more than 100 attributes of Allah and one attribute is *As-Salam* which means 'source of peace and security'. So I will be talking about the subject 'Muhamm-ad[saw]: A Messenger of Peace' and the subheading I've chosen is 'Muhammad[saw] and the Christians', because when you start talking about his life and the teachings in the Holy Qur'an, it is always difficult and almost impossible to cover different aspects, so I thought that I should highlight this aspect of the main subject.

If you see the history of humanity, religion has played a very important role in the life of humans and fortunately and also unfortunately, religion has been used positively and religion has been exploited. And if religion has been used positively, it has created peace and harmony and if it has been exploited, it has been used negatively, it resulted in unrest. The teaching Prophet Muhammad[saw] gave us is in the form of Holy Quran, the holy book of Muslims. In this holy book, we find the revelation of Prophet Muhammad[saw] which he got from Allah in 23 years of his ministry and it is very interesting that now many non-Muslims Orientalists, they confirm that this is the same book which was given by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] 1400 years ago. Some time they say Okay, we can have our doubts, we can have our reservation whether it is a word of God or not, this one thing is clear – this is the same Book given by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] 1400 years ago and this book does not know any change or any interpolation.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] has mentioned in the verse I've recited, the Prophet is presented as a model to be followed. So whatever we find in the book, Holy Qur'an, we find in the character of Prophet Muhammad[saw]. So if you want to understand the life of the Prophet, read the Holy Qur'an. If you want to understand the word of God in the Holy Qur'an, read the life of the Prophet. I will also be highlighting this point that Ahmadiyya Muslim Community wants to establish world peace through peaceful means, as was established by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and his successors in seventh century Arabia. The first point, the first step towards peace is our belief in all the Prophets. We can say comfortably, based on the Holy Qur'an that every Muslim believes in all the Prophets; and according to the Holy Qur'an, God says that He has sent Prophets to all nations. This is a common myth that people think that God has sent Prophets only in the Middle East. God says in the Holy Qur'an:

"There was no nation where a Warner has not been sent by God".

So whether they are the Aborigines of Australia or Chinese nation or Indian or the Natives of Americas or the African nation, whether we know

or not, whether we know the history of those Prophets, whether it is recorded or not, one thing is confirmed by God in this Holy Book that God has sent Prophets to all nations. Secondly, it is very interesting that the Holy Qur'an says that you not only believe in all the Prophets, you do not discriminate between them as far as your faith is concerned. And I quote from Chapter 3, verse 85, God says:

Say, 'We believe in Allah and in that which has been revealed to us, and that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the Tribes, and that which was given to Moses[as] and Jesus[as] and other Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and to Him we submit.'

No discrimination, no distinction between the Prophets. So as far as their prophet hood is concerned, our belief is in all of them. I can assure my brothers and sisters from other faiths that 1.5 billion Muslims disagree on many issues but on this issue, there is no disagreement. All of them, they say we believe in all of the Prophets and we make no distinction and no discrimination between the Prophets. Not only that, we believe that nobody or no religious group or no religion has monopoly on salvation. What kind of peace is this on one hand we say that we believe in Abraham and Moses and Jesus and the Krishna and Buddha and Confucius and in the same breath we say – but only Muslims will enter Paradise and attain salvation? This is not a Qur'anic view. This is misunderstood by many Muslim clerics. I will not go into this detail at this time.

So I quote from the Holy Qur'an and it is a very clear verse, one of the verses which clearly say that believers from all faiths can enter Paradise, they can attain salvation. It is God's prerogative to make this decision and not by the clerics of one religious group. I quote from Chapter 2, verse 63:

"Surely, the Believers, and the Jews, and the Christians and the Sabians — whichever party from among these truly believes in Allah and the Last Day and does good deeds — shall have their reward with their Lord, and no fear shall come upon them, nor shall they grieve."

The Holy Prophet[saw], when he got his first revelation, when he was 40 years of age and he started delivering this message to the Meccans, he faced a very strong opposition, he along with his earlier disciples was brutally persecuted. They were dragged in the streets of Mecca, they were left in the hot sand of Arabia and heavy stones were put on their chests and some of them were martyred and some of them were brutally beaten up. At that time, with the permission of the Holy Prophet[saw], Muslims started going to Abyssinia, modern Ethiopia, which was ruled by kings with the title of Negus. And they, one by one, smaller groups, one family, two families, they started going.

And then a good group of people were gathered in Ethiopia at that time. The Meccans were not satisfied with the persecution which they were doing in Mecca. They sent a delegation to the king of Abyssinia and he said 'Fine, I will call them to my court, you can present your case and I will talk to them'. And when he talked to the Muslims, headed by Prophet's cousin, Hadhrat Jafar[ra], he was older brother of Hadhrat Ali[ra], and he answered the questions of the king directly. And the king said 'Could you recite some of those verses which have been given to your Prophet?' And he said yes and he recited from Chapter 19 of the Holy Qur'an and the chapter's title is Maryam, the Arabic form of Mary, the mother of Jesus[as]. This is a long passage but I think it is very important and vital that I should read it for you. Starting from verse 17:

"And relate the story of Mary as mentioned in the Book. When she withdrew from her people to a place to the east, And screened herself off from them, then We sent Our angel to her, and he appeared to her in the form of a perfect man. She said, 'I seek refuge with the Gracious God from thee if indeed thou dost fear Him.' He replied, 'I am only a Messenger of thy Lord, that I may bestow on thee a righteous son.' She said, 'How can I have a son when no man has touched me, neither have I been unchaste?' He replied, 'Thus it is.' But says thy Lord, 'It is easy for Me; and We shall do so that We may make him a Sign unto men, and a mercy from Us, and it is a thing decreed.' So she conceived him, and withdrew with him to a remote place. Then he called her from beneath her, saying, "Grieve not. Thy Lord has placed a rivulet below thee; "And shake towards thyself the trunk of the palm-tree; it will cause fresh ripe dates to fall upon thee. "So eat and drink, and cool thy eye. And if thou seest any man, say, 'I have vowed a fast to the Gracious God; I will therefore not speak this day to any human

being.'" Then she brought him to her people, carrying him. They said, 'O Mary, thou hast brought forth a strange thing. 'O sister of Aaron, thy father was not a wicked man nor was thy mother an unchaste woman!' Then she pointed to him. They said, 'How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle?' 'And He has made me blessed wheresoever I may be, and has enjoined upon me Prayer and almsgiving so long as I live; And He has made me dutiful toward my mother, and He has not made me haughty and unblessed. 'And peace was on me the day I was born, and peace there will be on me the day I shall die, and the day I shall be raised up to life again.' Such was Jesus, son of Mary. This is a statement of the truth about which they doubt."

(Chapter 16: verses 17-35)

After listening to this, can a real, good Muslim who believes in the word of God, who believes in the Holy Qur'an, can hate a Christian? Impossible. When the Holy Prophet[saw] lived for 13 years after his first revelation, 13 hard years of persecution, as I mentioned earlier, he also decided to migrate from Mecca to a place called *Yathrib*, modern Medina and unfortunately for the Meccans, they decided to attack the Holy Prophet[saw]. And first of all only the Meccans, then in the second battle they brought more tribes with them and then in the third battle they even brought whole of Arabia with big army against ill-equipped and weak Muslims. They tried again and again. When first time they attacked, The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] received a revelation where permission to fight was given first time – fight in self defense. And these two verses have a very profound message, not only for the Muslims but for the whole world. And I quote, Chapter 22, verse 40, 41:

"Permission to fight is given to those against whom war is made, because they have been wronged — and Allah indeed has power to help them —

Those who have been driven out from their homes unjustly only because they said, 'Our Lord is Allah' — And if Allah did not repel some men by means of others, there would surely have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of Allah is oft commemorated. And Allah will surely help one who helps Him. Allah is indeed Powerful, Mighty"

Permission to fight is given but then Allah says that if this permission is given, those anti-religion forces will wipe out all these places of worship and God mentions first, the Christian places of worship, cloisters and churches, then he mentions synagogues, the Jewish place of worship and then in the end he mentions mosque. So my brothers and sisters, this is very important to understand that as true Muslims, we cannot even have, we cannot even entertain an idea to say a word against a place of worship of any faith. And those who are all out to destroy and desecrate them; they did not follow and did not understand the message of Islam and the message of the Holy Prophet[saw] of Islam.

Let me give you a very important piece of history where a letter was written by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] giving assurance of peace to the Christian nation. St Catherine's Monastery is commonly known as Santa Katarina, lies on the Sinai Peninsula at the foot of Mt. Sinai. The monastery is Orthodox and is a UNESCO world heritage site and I'm quoting this from Wikipedia. It was built between 548 and 565 and is one of the oldest working Christian monasteries in the world. In 628, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] wrote a letter and granted a Charter of Privileges to the Monks of the monastery. This monastery's photographs are available on Google but we also have an exhibition about the life of the Holy Prophet[saw] and you can see this and the copy of letter that was written by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]. The letter says:

"This is a message from Muhammad ibn Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity, near and far, we are with them. Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by Allah! I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims' houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God's covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily, they are my allies and have my secure charter against all that they hate. No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray. Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the

sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day".

Some people say that perhaps the authenticity of this paper is questionable but my answer to them is- first of all, it is in line with the teachings of the holy Qur'an. Number two, it is in line with the model and practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]. Number three, for 1400 years Muslims have honored this Charter. And I will give you another Charter of this sort which is very well documented in the Muslim sources. So if someone sees both these documents, he can say that this is perhaps given by the same person. When Islam started spreading, the Holy Prophet[saw] would write letters to different tribes and he would give them two options. One option was, as I am a Messenger of Allah, I have a message from God and I have to deliver that message to you and that message is of peace and you accept me, then you will be part of our greater brotherhood and sisterhood. But there is no compulsion in matters of faith. If you decide not to accept my message, then you accept the authority of Muslim state, which would mean that we will guarantee you that in case of war, the Muslim government will be responsible for your defense and for that you will pay a tax called *Jizya*. So Christians in Yemen accepted that and started living without trouble but in other part of Yemen, which is called Najran, the message was delivered by the Holy Prophet[saw] and it was written to the Bishop of Najran and he sent a three man commission or delegation to the Holy Prophet[saw] of Islam. They had discussion and dialogue. They went back and reported to their higher officials and to the church authority and then they decided that a bigger group should go and 60 people they came. First of all, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] offered his mosque to them for their worship. Sometimes, some Muslims say that a Christian cannot enter a mosque. But the mosque that was the first mosque built by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and he himself says that this Christian delegation can offer their prayer in my mosque and then a dialogue started which developed into a debate and then there was no resolution. The Holy Prophet[saw] offered them to have a *Mubahala*, a sort of a prayer duel, which means that you pray to God, we pray to God and then we leave in the hand of God to make a decision. But they said 'No, we will go back and make the final decision' and this decision as that we will accept the authority of the Muslim state and we will pay the *Jizya* tax and we want to have our faith and the practice of our faith without any problem. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] wrote and nobody has ever questioned the authenticity of this document:

"The lives, property, land belongings (present or absent) and then places of worship of the inhabitants of Najran and those who live in its surroundings are the responsibility of Allah, the Exalted and His Messenger, Muhammad. No bishop, monk or priest will be removed from his office. This is a declaration of security and peace from Muhammad, the Messenger of God, in favor of Abu Haris, the Bishop of Najran and for the other priests and their followers and monks and their followers and for their churches and places of worship. None of their priests shall be removed from his office, from among their monks none shall hindered or removed from their office. They shall not be deprived of their rights and shall be permitted all their due regard and powers in which they are established, so as long as they maintain goodwill and live in peace and do not join with those who exceed the bound and do not give any such person shelter, they shall always remain in the protection of the Messenger of God."

But when you hear the news, how the Coptic Church is being treated in Egypt, how when you see that churches have been demolished and attacked by Muslims in Nigeria, in Pakistan, in some other countries, I must say that this is the worst type of exploitation of religion and this is how people are being taught what is not in the Holy Qur'an and what was not practiced by the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]. The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] always, always tried to secure peace, develop peace. He was a peaceful person and he wanted peace at all costs and for this he had given many sacrifices – personal sacrifices or national sacrifices on behalf of Muslims.

So by the grace of Allah, Ahmadiyya Muslim Community is taking this message to the whole world and we say, watch, don't believe every cleric who is all out to exploit Islam, who is all out to destroy Islam. Come and read the Holy Qur'an. Come and study the beautiful life of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and you will come to the conclusion. May Allah bless you all. *Jazakum Allah Wa Ahsanal Jaza. Durood.*

SUNNAH--THE BEST MODEL LEADING TO DIVINE MERCY AND LOVE

Dr. Faheem Younus

Transcribed by Fatima Minhas

يُحْبِبْكُمُ اللّٰهُ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوبَكُمْ ۗ وَاللّٰهُ غَفُورٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿٣١﴾

Then will Allah will love you and forgive your faults. And Allah is Most Forgiving, and Merciful. (3:32)

Have you ever been rejected by someone you loved? When they ask this question, when the researchers ask this specific question, to college students in America, 90% of men and women say yes, they have been rejected. And yet, when anthropologists study love around the world, in more than 170 different societies, they find the existence, the phenomenon, the desire, to be loved in each and every society around the world. This is the biggest mover and shaker in the world. It makes you the biggest risk taker. There is no way for me to know, thousands of people at this *Jalsa*, but you can ask yourself, and I can guarantee you the biggest risk you ever took in your life was driven by love. You were driven by love of something, that you just took a very big risk.

The topic of my speech today is *Sunnah*--the Best Model Leading to Divine Mercy and Love. Love, It revolves around that word. That word which we today have to decode, and I think, what I would try to do, is let's decode what gets people to love us. We all want to be loved, so by the end of these 25 minutes, we should know the recipe so that we should never have to face that rejection which 90% of men and women in American colleges are facing. But one of the reasons they face that rejection, I see some college students sitting here, one of the reasons is because they go for a shallow love. See, the phenomenon of love is very different. Love gets saturated very, very fast. It needs to expand its target, it yearns to become bigger, it wants to become... It's a little speck, it's a little pixel- one second, and wants to take over the canvas the next second. It's a drop today, and wants to become an ocean tomorrow. So once you understand love, then the phenomenon of rejection will be understood as well, and we'll try to do that by virtue of two different stories. They are both stories of love. They're both stories of courage and hope. But one, I believe, is a story of tragedy, and the other is the story of triumph.

In 2001, a woman who works in West London in a shopping mall, in a shopping store, she came to work, at 7 A.M. in the morning, she found a person lying upside down, prone in the parking lot. And there was some fluid around him. She thought he was a drunk who probably just overdid, over drunk himself last night, but as she got closer, he was not a drunk. This was a dead body. How she could tell, because his limbs were all over the place. His arms were not in the right place, and that liquid, that was this person's brain. It was his brain that was all around him. As they turned around, she called the police, and murder investigation started. This was a 21-year-old Pakistani man. A Muslim Pakistani man in West London. Police started searching- what killed him, murder investigation. There was no gunshot, no gunshot wound, no poisoning, no sign of suffocation, no sign of strangulation, no sign of violence. What caused the death? They were baffled. But I can tell you right now; they thought West London, Pakistani man, maybe a hate crime. I can guarantee you, this was not a crime, and this was driven by love. We'll come to that in a second.

As they started investigating, and the story was published in *The Guardian*, they found that this 21-year-old man used to live in Dada Hara, which is a small town in Swat, in the Northwest Pakistan. He has five brothers, four sisters- extremely poor family. They took so much debt for him to go to Dubai. He wanted to go to Dubai, make money, for the love of his family. As he

got to Dubai, he realized that the $100 a month that was promised to him turned out to become $40 a month. He was supposed to work all day for $40 a month, and even he was not getting that paycheck. So he spent 6 months in Dubai, and he was distraught. His family is in debt, he has 5 brothers, 4 sisters, he's 21 years old. He's driven by the love of his family. And then, when the police went, met his father, he was extremely grieved. Can you imagine the grief - the grief, of a father whose 21-year-old son was found dead on the other end of the globe, with his brains spilt all around his body? He was crying, he said, "My son had the power of 4 men, but it was the thirst, it was his quest for bread that killed him."

Now, since we are going to talk about Sunnah, at this moment I want you to think about it. You're probably feeling empathy for that father; you're probably wondering what killed this man. I'll tell you in a second. But for a second, think about the grief - the grief of Rasoolallah[saw]. This man lost one son; I'm not trying to minimize that. But Rasoolallah[saw] lost his children, he lost his wife, he lost his property, he lost his city, he lost his parents, he lost his uncle, he lost his grandfather, he lost loved ones in front of him in battlefield. And then, Allah gives him the responsibility to become the spiritual father of all of us. Millions of Muslims around the world, can you imagine the grief? So, the Holy Qur'an says, "It grieves the prophet, it grieves him, that you should fall into trouble. He is desirous of your welfare." One night, Hadhrat Aisha[ra] saw that Rasoolallah[saw] was not in the bed. She went out looking for him, and where did she find him? He was in a graveyard, in a cemetery crying, praying for his progeny, for his *Ummah.*

Going back to the mystery, what happened in West London? The man, after not getting paid for 6 months, one day went to Bahrain. And he started- you know this is about following. You want to follow Rasoolallah-[saw], because if you don't follow him, you're going to follow someone. This boy followed a someone, who said, "You know what? At 1 A.M. tonight, there is a plane leaving for London. You get on that British Airline flight, you'll be in London tomorrow." But he didn't have a Visa. He didn't have a ticket. He had love. He had courage. He had hope. He had drive. So what he did, he sneaked through security, got below the plane, he climbed up the wheel, and got into the undercarriage of the plane, where the wheels of a 747 were going to fold in, the landing gear, and he hid in there. As the plane took off, the landing gear closed, and in that little compartment is this little boy, 21 years old. What he didn't know, in that landing gear, there is no heat, there is no air, there is no pressure, and there is no escape. He didn't know that, he was following the wrong crowd. So within 10 minutes, as the plane took off, the outside temperature was -56. As a doctor, I can tell you that would comatose you right away. He probably became numb; he probably became comatose. And before the plane could land at Heathrow, when the pilot opened that landing gear, he fell out of that like a rock, into the thin, crisp air of London, hit the pavement, hit that parking lot. A land where he probably dreamed to raise a good family one day. That's what happened. What a horrible choice, what a self-destructing choice. No one of us would ever make such a choice, right?

Here's the second story. 1400 years ago, another young man, who was very rich. He was not poor. His family, in fact, exactly opposite. His family didn't love him. They hated him, because he fell in love with Rasoolallah[saw]. He converted to Islam. They left him. Rasoolallah[saw] sent him to Medina. Within a matter of a few years, before Rasoolallah[saw] could come to Medina, he had converted 5, 8, 10,000 (you find different numbers) people to Islam. Such an over-zealous missionary! And during the time of Uhud, when the people left their positions and the Muslim army was under attack, there was a clear path to Rasoolallah[saw] that the enemy could attack him. This young man resembled the Holy Prophet[saw]. His face, his complexion, people would confuse him for Rasoolallah[saw]. He had a *Mushaabihat*, he had a resemblance. So what he did, he was the flag bearer. The Holy Prophet[saw] had given him the flag. So he started waving that flag to attract the enemy towards himself. And he started yelling and crying, and he started yelling. "Muhammad[saw] is but a messenger of Allah." And all those people who were coming to attack Rasoolllah[saw], they came after him. He knew, he knew he was taking a risk. He knew he was making a fatal choice. He, yet, made that choice. The enemy attacked him. They crushed one arm. One arm fell off; he grabbed the flag

with the other arm. They cut his other arm; he grabbed the flag with the stumps of his arms. And then, history says, *Ibne Kamiya*, who was an extremely powerful, well-crafted Meccan, he threw a spear and he killed this *Sahabi*, and Rasoolallah[saw] came to his funeral. There was no mystery about this death. Everybody knew, Muslims saw, everybody knew what happened. He made a conscious choice to ride the first class. He was not in the landing gear. There was no secret here. Rasoolallah[saw] came to him and recited the verse of the Holy Qur'an, "Among the believers are men who have been true to what they have pledged to Allah."

If I ask you, I can guarantee you, there are thousands of people here, this was published in *The Guardian*, none of you would remember the name of the first person in the first story. Anyone out there? Raise your hand. Nobody, I can guarantee you, no one can name the person, because history doesn't record such names. And I can guarantee you there are people here who know the name in the second story. Hadhrat Musab bin Umair[ra]. That is the true love of Rasoolallah[saw] that we have to emulate. But today when there are some people who call themselves Muslims and then resort to extremism, they don't understand. They are giving the enemies of Islam a clear path to attack the character of Rasoolallah[saw], and there is one group, there is one group that is leading the charge, and I believe that group is Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, because there is hardly any other group that can emulate that teaching. When they ask, why are these Ahmadi Muslims suffering the pain and persecution and they remain patient? We respond, because this is the *Sunnah* of Rasoolallah[saw], and that is why we do it. And they say, why do these Ahmadis face social boycott and they remain peaceful? We say, because our Prophet faced bigger, more stronger boycotts and he remained peaceful. And they say, why do these Ahmadis don't fight when they are barred from performing *Hajj*? And we say, because our Prophet[saw] was barred from performing *Hajj* and he remained peaceful. He did not fight back. And then they are puzzled and they say, but then why don't you self -declare yourself non-Muslims? Why don't you just stop preaching this message of Islam and Ahmadiyyat? And we say exactly what our beloved Rasoolallah[saw] said to the Meccans 1400 years ago, that if you put the sun in one of our hands and the moon in the other, we will still not stop preaching the message of Islam and Ahmadiyyat that we were taught by the Promised Messiah[as]. But as individuals- that is the character of this *Jama'at*- as individuals, are we also following the *Sunnah* of Rasoolallah[saw]? See, nobody would make the choice of going into that landing gear and trying to accomplish what that 21-year-old did, but the Qur'an warns us about that. Allah says, "When they see some business or amusement, they rush towards it, leaving the Prophet[saw] standing alone." That's the character of some Muslims, even back then.

There are people who take the risky approach of getting into the landing gear. It just looks different. For that man, the challenge was poverty. From the standards of $40 a month, many of us here are probably rich, so our challenge cannot be poverty, so our landing gear looks different. So when we have a problem between brothers, and we keep those grudges in our hearts, trust me, we are hiding in the landing gear. When there is a TV show going on or there is a Facebook friend that we are chatting with, and there is *Namaz* time and *Salat* time, and nobody gets up to say *Salat*, trust me, at that moment, you and I, we were in the landing gear. When we make wealth in this country and we buy jewelries and cars and homes and bank balances, and we don't pay *Zakat* on that, trust me, at that moment, we are hiding in the landing gear. And when, I say this with extreme pain, when our boys sacrifice their Muslim identity in our schools and colleges, and our girls sacrifice Hijab for social acceptance, at that moment, you are in the landing gear. When we live a double life, and you know what I mean by that, a life that is different Saturday and Sunday in the mosque, and from Monday to Friday it's different, at that moment, we are in the landing gear.

Rasoolallah[saw] said, "None of you will have faith until he loves me more than his father, his children, and all mankind." What kind of love is this? How can we say that we are driven by the love of Rasoolallah[saw], if we are seeking material world? There's nothing wrong with seeking material world, don't get me wrong. Go be a Bill Gates, but not at the expense of your Hereafter. That's my point. It cannot be at the expense of the destination where this

plane is supposed to take us. It is very hard. Once we are in those habits, it gets cold. We don't have oxygen. We become numb. We lose consciousness. Decades go by, and then the plane of our life comes to the close. There is landing time. We are all going to die. And when the pilot, Allah *Ta'ala,* is going to open that landing gear, we're going to fall out like a rock. And those 2,000 friends on Facebook, they are not going to help us that day. That beautiful car that I love to show my friends, it's going to be here. That house may still have some mortgage left. I'm not saying don't pursue these things, but please, not at the expense of our *Sunnah,* not at the expense of following Rasoolallah[saw], or we will be among those 90% who are rejected. We want the world to follow Rasoolallah[saw], but the core integrity in American population is very high. You all can think of a friend, a neighbor, a coworker, who's very truthful, very knowledgeable, very hardworking. On a scale of 1-10 in goodness, they're probably already an 8. They will not be inspired by anyone who's a 5 or a 6. They need a 9 or a 10 to be inspired. We're dealing with a very high integrity out there. Mark Zuckerberg founded Facebook, and he said, he wrote on Facebook, he said one of his goals in life was to eliminate desire. If you follow, if I follow the model of Rasoolallah[saw], it eliminates that desire that useless desire makes us more honest. We'll become more honest like Rasoolallah[saw]. We will become more trustworthy to the world; we will become more compassionate, more forgiving, more loving, more patient. We will become better parents, better children, better coworkers, better leaders. You'll be happier, I guarantee you, you'll be more successful. That life must be like flying in the first class.

So let's move from that suffocation of the landing gear, just a few feet. First class is not that far off. And let's imagine, what was it that Musab bin Umair[ra] was seeing. I'm a stupid guy. I think very basic. I look at him, and I think Musab bin Umair[ra] riding in first class. I never rode first class in my life. I don't have any dreams. But I knew, I know, Musab bin Umair[ra] was probably riding first class at that battlefield of Uhud, looking out the window and seeing the rivers of Paradise. I imagine that he was seeing the gardens of Paradise. He was seeing the fruits of that love. Otherwise, there is no way that you can be that driven. There was something he was seeing that I'm not seeing, that you aren't seeing, that some of us are not seeing. Man, he was happy! I cannot believe that he was not happy.

So now we have a choice. Mark Zuckerberg says that his goal is to eliminate desire, and yet he goes on to create something that's exactly the opposite, that simply generates more and more desire. So, go be a Mark Zuckerberg, go be a LeBron James, go be a Bill Gates, but please, not at the expense of your Hereafter, because that will be a bad choice. In the end, this is, as one of my friends said, a selfish pursuit of heaven. We all need to compete for that. The Holy Quran says, "Compete with one another for Paradise, whose price is the heaven and the earth." Where is that competition? That competition will not come unless we start following the Sunnah of Rasoolallah[saw]. Some say this is impossible. How can we become Muhammad[SAW]? Some say this is blasphemy. People don't get it when we say that. They don't understand, because Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra], in fact, said, "Your biggest objective should be to become a living example of Muhammad[saw], in your capacity, in your circle of influence. The day when you will become a personification of Muhammad[saw], in every walk of your life, that day the world will believe that Rasoolallah[saw] is still alive. And they will say, that until we really see the real Muhammad[saw], it's hard for us to wait any longer. That day, the whole mankind will join the servitude of Rasoolallah[saw]."

But this is all talk. And now we're going to come to an action item. Now it's time to get out of that landing gear. In 9 days, the holy month of *Ramadan* will start, and the National Department of *Tarbiyyat* USA is launching a campaign for *Ramadan.* Let's observe this Ramadan the way Rasoolallah[saw] truly did. Let's follow the *Sunnah* of Rasoolallah[saw] during this *Ramadan.* We all do it really well, but let's take it a notch up this year. Whatever you did last year, let's do it better this year. So, today when you will go out in the parking lot, you will see something like this on your windshield. Don't throw it away, because this is your boarding pass to heaven. Don't throw it away. Don't complain later on, why am I in the landing gear? This is for you, because this is the *Sunnah* of Rasoolallah[saw] to say your 5 daily prayers on time, to keep those 30

fasts, to recite the Holy Qur'an at least once. If you can't read in Arabic, at least in your own language. But do recite Holy Qur'an once. Do give extra charity. If *Zakat* has been obligated upon you, do pay your *Zakat. The* Holy Prophet[saw] used to do so much charity during Ramadan. And then, you have the guarantee of Rasoolallah[saw]. Hazoor says, "Whoever fasts during *Ramadan* out of sincere faith and hoping to attain Allah's reward, then all his past sins will be forgiven." That's it. 30 days. That's a great deal. Take it.

So this brings me to the close. In the beginning, I told you about college students. 90% of them have been rejected. Allah says in the Holy Quran, the verse I recited in the beginning, "If you love Allah, follow me. Follow Rasoolallah[saw]. Then Allah will love you and he will forgive your faults." That is the guarantee; let's let that love expand. Let's not go after these silly infatuations. That's not love. Love wants to take over. There's a chain of love. Love takes over the target and then starts looking for a bigger target, takes over that target and yet starts looking for a bigger target, until it gets to a target that it cannot take over. That is Allah. If your love is not connected in that chain, there is something missing, there is something wrong, because Rasoolallah[saw] said "So Allah gave the guarantee, you love Rasoolallah[saw], Allah will love you." How does the chain work? "When Allah loves a slave," Rasoolallah[saw] says, "when Allah loves a slave, he calls out Jibraeel and says, 'I love so and so, so you love him.' Then Jibraeel[as] loves him. After that, Jibraeel announces to the inhabitants of heavens, 'Allah loves so and so, so all of you angels, you also love him.' And they love him. And then all those angels come to the earth and they say to the inhabitants of the earth, 'Allah loves so and so, so you love him or her.' And they love that person."

So this is the secret. The recipe is out. If we want to follow, if we want to follow the *Sunnah* of Rasoolallah[saw], the *Sunnah* of compassion, forgiveness, prayer, belief, honesty, patience; then there is no rejection. Rasoolallah[saw] will not reject you. Allah will not reject you. You will be accepted. And Allah will remove those silly infatuations from our life, and He will make sure that everyone around you will love you. Let's follow that practice, the *Sunnah* of Rasoolallah[saw], and we will never be among the 90% of those people who feel rejected. *Insha Allah*, all of us, may Allah make us among those who are loved by Allah and his creation.

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HADITH

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "A poor person is not the one in need of soliciting one or two dates, nor one or two mouthfuls of food. Rather, a poor person is the one who (despite being in dire need) avoids begging."

(Bukhari kitabuttafsir surah Al-Baqarah la yasa-lu-nanna-sa alha-fan)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "A poor person is not the one who goes round the people and asks them for one or two mouthfuls (of food), and one or two dates. Rather, a poor person is one who does not have enough even for his bare necessities, and no one knows about his poverty so that they could give him something in charity and yet he does not beg from other people."

(Bukhari kitabuzzakat surah Al-Baqarah la yasa-lu-nanna-sa alha-fan))

Hadhrat Ibin 'Umar[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "Moderation in spending is half the art of living; friendliness towards people is half the wisdom; the right method of inquiry is half of learning."

(Baihaqi fi sha'baliman Mishkat bab al-hadhar wattani fil amur, p 430)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] reports that Imam Tirmidhi says that he (the Holy Prophet[saw]) said: "Be moderate in friendship, for one day your friend may turn against you. Likewise, be moderate in hostility, as it is possible that your enemy might become your friend one day."

(Tirmidhi abwabul bir walsilah bab fil iqtisad fil hubb walbughd)

ADDRESS BY MR. UTHMAN VILLEFAS IN ENGLISH AND SPANISH

Respected *Ameer Sahib* and dear brothers and sisters.

Respetado Ameer Sahib Querido Hermanos y Hermanas

Assalamo Alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakatuh

May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be with you.

Que la paz, misericordia, y las bendiciones de Allah sean con ustedes

Today Islam is the fasting growing religion in the world. In the next few minutes, I will explain my path to Ahmadiyyat-the true Islam. It is important that we continue to practice true Islam for our benefit and to show new members the correct ways. I've struggled in my life without God and was reconnected again through Islam. The road on this new path may become difficult after accepting Islam. We need to start a new trend and connect with the Hispanic community. Islam is for everyone and this is how I found it.

I was raised in a Catholic household.

Yo naci y era educado en el catolocismo.

I always believed in God but questioned many of the inconsistencies within the Catholic Church.

Siempre he criedo en Dios, pero cuestione muchas de las inconsistencias dentro la Iglesia Catholica.

One day, I came to a Methodist church to explore what Religious founders day was about. I knew other faiths existed of course, but didn't have any real exposure to different ideologies.

Sabia que existian otras religiones, por supuesto, pero no tenia ninguna real exposicion a diferente ideologias.

It was by Allah Almighty's grace that I saw that sign and decided to educate myself. I was pleasantly surprised and amazed to see people from diverse faiths and cultural backgrounds inside the church. It was a bit of a culture shock since I was used to attending a predominantly Hispanic congregation.

Fue para mi un choque de cultura, ya que estaba acostumbrado a una congregacion predominantemente hispana. Of couse,

it is a social society and world and people are important. But the fundamental reason I was in that church was to become closer to Allah Almighty.

Pero la razon fundamental de estar en la Iglesia iba a cerca me mas a Allah todopoderoso.

Everything we do makes a difference. My new brothers and sisters. It will not be easy and you will experience some hardships which is quite natural. I know I have.

Mis nuevos hermanos y hermanas. No va ser facil y es natural que van a tener dificultades. Yo he tenido mis experiencias.

My first visit to the mosque was awkward.

Estaba incomodo y nervioso caundo visite la mesquite por la perimera ves.

I felt like a complete stranger but was greeted and treated warmly.

Me sentia como un disconocido, pero me dieron la bienvenida y eran muy amable com migo.

I needed clarification about the new concepts that were presented to me. A key point of emphasis I want to hone in on was how to obtain a true personal relationship with my Creator. Since my *Bai'at* I have sworn to be obedient to basic teachings of Islam and the ten conditions of *Bai'at.*

Desde mi baait he jurado ser obediente de las ensenanzas basicas del Islam y las diez condicions de Bai'ai.

I might be the exemption, but many are still lost. I found Ahmadiyat at a *Tabligh* event hosted by the *Jama'at.* We must continue to take part and help spread the message that we are truly blessed to obtain.

Tenemos que seguir para particar

y ayudar a difundir el mensaje de que estamos verderdamente ben dicidos de obtener.

I don't find myself as a "convert" of Islam but one who is following the example Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw], The Promised Messiah[as] and the *Khulafa.* My brothers and sisters, please don't be afraid to reach out to others of different cultures or backgrounds. We are all the children of Allah.

Somos todos los hijos de Dios.

We have the opportunity to move forward and be obedient to Hazoor's wishes of reaching out to the Hispanic community. Don't let these opportunities and blessings get away. There have been many continued efforts in the past but with little success. People have accepted Islam after Hazoor's visit to the West Coast.

Personas han aceptado el Islam despues de Huzurs visita a la costa oeste.

The measure and success of this wish is for us to go out and serve. Pray for the success of this initiative by Hazoor. The West Coast in particular has many contacts waiting for your voice. In Chicago, a group of Guatemalans are collaborating with Humanity First to better serve each other. Remember that I found Ahmadiyyat at a *Tabligh* event. We can make a difference if we continue to do *Tabligh* in places that are uncommon. Let's embrace one another, talk, listen and learn about our cultures . I know that our cultures have many similarities.

Vamos a abrazar nos, hablar, escuchar y aprender de nuestras culturas. Se que nuestras culturas tienen muchas similitudes.

My relationship with Allah is the only one that matters at the end of the day. New converts are struggling and need your help. A new community is waiting to accept Islam. We are extremely blessed to have our *Khalifa*[aba] give us guidance regularly. Whether one is born into the faith or a convert like myself, we should follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and the Promised Messiah[as] and do our upmost to spread the message to the corners of the earth.

May Allah enable us to practice true Islam, show our love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and the Promised Messiah[as], and listen to our *Khalifa* of the age.

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HADITH

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "Religion is easy but the one who overburdens himself and tries to overwhelm religion is subdued by it (religion). Therefore, be moderate and adopt the middle path (nearest to perfection). Give glad tidings to the people that they will be rewarded and gain strength by asking for Allah's help in the morning, evening and in the latter part of the night."

HADITH

Hadhrat Anas bin Malik[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "Three virtues are part of belief: When a Muslim becomes angry, his anger does not lead him to falsehood and when one is happy, his happiness does not make him abandon the truth; and he who, after obtaining power and authority does not gather more than what is his right."

(Al Mu'ajjamus Saghir lil-Tibrani bab min ismuhu Ahmad, p 61/1)

Hadhrat Anas[ra] relates that three men visited the houses of the wives of the Holy Prophet[saw]. They wanted to know how much the Holy Prophet[saw] worshipped. When they were told about it, they considered it as if it was lacking and interpreted it as: We are nothing compared to the Holy Prophet[saw]. All his sins have been forgiven. One of them said as far as I am concerned I would ever offer Prayer throughout the night. And the other said that I would always continuously keep fasting and would not break the fasting. The other one said that I would keep myself away from women and would never marry. So the Messenger[saw] of Allah came to them and said, "Are you those who had said such and such?_So far as I am concerned, by Allah, I certainly fear Allah more than you and I am more pious than you yet I keep fast and also break my fast; I offer Prayers and go to sleep (as well) and I marry women. Whosoever turns away from my *sunnah* has no relationship with me."

(Bukhari kitabunnikah at-Targhib finnikah wa kitabal Iman ba-b qaulunnabi[saw] ana a'lamakum billahi mulkhisan)

A COMMON SPIRIT - TWO ERAS OF COMPANIONS

Maulana Naseem Mahdi

Transcribed by Fatima Minhas

After Surah *Al-Fatihah*, I have recited the beginning verses of Surah *Al-Jumu'ah*, Chapter 62 of the Holy Qur'an. The translation is as follows:

"In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful. Whatever is in the heaven and whatever is in the earth glorifies Allah, the Sovereign, the Holy, the Mighty, the Wise. He it is who has raised among the unlettered people a messenger from among themselves who recites unto them his signs and purifies them and teaches them the book and wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest misguidance. And among others from among them who have not yet joined them. He is the Mighty, the Wise."

As *Ameer Sahib* had announced, the topic of my speech is 'A Common Spirit - Two Eras of Companions'. So first of all, I would like to highlight some of the points, what those two eras are. In this chapter, *Jumu'ah,* we find that Allah says that the Holy Prophet Muhammad Mustafa[saw] has been raised among the unlettered people of Arabia, and four different duties of the Holy Prophet[saw] are mentioned and discussed here. And then Allah says that he will have another advent among other people, those who have not yet met these companions of the Holy Prophet[saw]. So, very clearly, we see the two advents of the Holy Prophet[saw] are mentioned. When Holy Prophet[saw] recited this *Surah* in front of his companions and *Sahaba,* they could not understand that. Some thought that perhaps Holy Prophet[SAW] would go somewhere else. This Surah and the preceding Surah were revealed in Medina, so one cannot say they were revealed in Mecca so he would go to Medina. No, he was already in Medina. Some thought that perhaps when he goes back to Allah, he will descend once again. So they were perplexed. So one *Sahabi* stood up, and this is recorded in the book of *Bukhari*, which is the collection of *Ahadith*, it is the most authentic book after the Holy Qur'an. The *Hadith* is that the *Sahabi* stood up and said, "Who are those people where you are going to go?" And Holy Prophet[saw] kept quiet. And then this question was repeated. He kept quiet second time. And third time the question was repeated, asked, and then he spoke. This was the style of the Holy Prophet[saw] that where he did not know the answer, he would wait for the inspiration from Allah. So he said and he put his hand on the shoulder of a *Sahabi*, Hadhrat Salman Farsi[ra], the Persian. He put his hand on his shoulder and the first thing he immediately clarified was that this was that we heard from *Surah Jumu'ah*, although apparently means that I will come back but it will not happen, it will be fulfilled by another person on my behalf. Number one. Number two it will happen when the faith has gone to Pleiades. The faith has gone from the earth back to the heaven, to the *Surraya.* And then the faith will be brought back, so it was not a matter of 10 years or 20 years or 100 years because in another *Hadith* he says 'the best century is mine and then the next century'. So it was not going to happen in 300 years, it will be beyond that. And interestingly he also said that it will not be an Arab. He will be a non-Arab and he will be of Persian descent.

And when the next verse says "This is the Grace of Allah, whomsoever He wants to give, He blesses him'. So if this had been the Second coming of Holy Prophet[saw] physically, there was no need to say that this grace Allah will give to whom He pleases, the grace has already been given to Holy Prophet[saw]. So it also shows that it was very clear that someone else will come and he will fulfill this prophecy. Now you go back to one *Surah* preceding this and that is *Surah A-Saff.* In *Surah Al-Saff*, in the very beginning, Hadhrat Musa[as] is mentioned. And in the Holy Qur'an, Chapter 73, Allah says 'We have sent to you a Prophet who is a witness on you as we sent a Prophet to Pharaoh", Hadhrat Musa[as]. Holy Prophet[saw] has a resemblance with Hadhrat Musa[as]. And then afterwards Haddhrat Isa[as] is mentioned and in most of the *Ahadith*, when Holy Prophet[saw] spoke about the person who was coming in the latter days, he mentioned Isa[as] or *Ibn-e-*

Maryam. So the second Prophet mentioned in Sura *Al-Saff* is Hadhrat Isa[as] and he is giving the glad tiding of the coming of a person named Ahmad. This is also a very clear sign why the word Muhammad is not mentioned. And I will not go into the detail. But interestingly the person who got this responsibility from Allah, his parents did not know when they were naming that person, that baby and the name was given –Ghulam Ahmad. In Arabic, Ghulam is a boy or son. A boy of Ahmad or son of Ahmad. And Ghulam in Urdu is a servant, a slave – a servant of Ahmad. So this was Ahmad coming on behalf of Muhammad[saw] but being a servant of Muhammad[saw], not being equal to him.

In the same *Surah Al-Saff,* verse no 8, Allah says 'this person, he will be called to Islam'. So during the time of Holy Prophet[saw], nobody called him to Islam. So this was also a prophecy that when a person will come fulfilling that prophecy, he will be called back to Islam. And you know that Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] and his community is again and again called, that you come and accept Islam, because you are not Muslim, so we invite you to come in the fold of Islam. Interestingly the time of coming is also fixed in the Holy Qur'an and that is in verse 9 when Allah Says "Allah will complete his light". And Hadhrat Masih-Mau'ood[as] says that completion of light means full moon because after 14th night, then the light starts decreasing. So full moon is the 14th night. And Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] says this also shows that he will come in the 14th century. Now another point is that in this verse, which is the main focus of our discussion, the word is *'Ahkareen'* with *zabar* on *Khe*. 'Akhareen' means others. Then there are verses where *Akhereen* is mentioned with a *zer* on *Khe*. So *Akhareen* means those who will come later, people in the latter days. In *Surah Al-Waqiah*, Allah says 'A large party from among the early Muslims and a large party from the later ones'. So this is the second era which we are talking about. The first era was the time of Holy Prophet[saw] and now we are in the era of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as].

Now I come to the *Sahaba* of Holy Prophet[saw] and the Sahaba of Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as]. Just to recap what I have already said that according to the Holy Qur'an, there are two advents of the Holy Prophet[saw]. One is the physical one and the other is spiritual one. One happened when the Holy Prophet[saw] came to the unlettered people of Arabia in 7th century Arabia and then in the 14th century, according to our belief, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian[as] has been blessed and through him, the second coming of the Holy Prophet[saw] has taken place. Then there were the *Sahaba* of the Holy Prophet[saw] in the first advent and now there are the *Sahaba* of the Holy Prophet[saw] because it is the second coming of the Holy Prophet[saw]. And the topic is that we see the same spirit in these *Sahaba.* Let me talk about this spirit. Hadhrat Masih Mau'ood[as] says and first I will read in Urdu.

"I again present to you the example of the *Sahaba*, the companions of the Holy Prophet[saw] and say that they believed in the Holy Prophet[saw], the Messenger of Allah, and proved their faith in him by their practical actions and deeds. By their actions they proved they have seen God, the God who is hidden beyond anyone's reach and of whose existence, those who worship falsehood have no knowledge. They, the *Sahaba*, had seen God with their own eyes. Yes, with their own eyes, they had seen God. If this was not the case, then tell me pray, what was it that made them so, so that they cared not for anything. What was it that made them, they left their people. They abandoned their homes, lands and properties. They broke off relationships with their nearest and dearest relatives. It was their total trust in God alone that allowed them to do these things and having faith and trust in the One God, they accomplished such deeds that if we go through the annals of history, we are left amazed and awe-struck. It was just their faith and only their faith and nothing else. Against them, opposing them were the well laid out plans of the worldly and all their imaginations and efforts, but they were not able to succeed. In numbers, in strength and in wealth, in all these things, the opponents of the *Sahaba* had the advantage. But they lacked faith and just because they did not have faith, they were destroyed and could not accomplish their goals. But the *Sahaba* won over everything by the power of their faith. When the *Sahaba* heard the voice of a man, an *Ummi,* an unlettered one, but one who had attained fame as being truthful and trustworthy, when this man said that I have been sent by Allah, the Exalted, as they heard him say this, they became his and joined his ranks and they followed him as if they were totally devoted to him and oblivious to everything else. I again say it was just one thing that changed their condition completely and this was their faith. Remember faith in God is something very big. Now I will be talking about some of the *Sahaba*.. (Speech ended here: Editor)

REPORT ON 65th JALSA SALANA USA

Lubna Malik, Assistant General Secretary Lajna Ima'Illah

By the Grace of Allah the Almighty, *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya USA successfully held its 65th Jalsa *Salana* at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex, Harrisburg, PA.

Friday Afternoon

The formal proceeding of *Jalsa Salana* commenced on June 28, 2013, with the flag hoisting ceremony, after which *Naib Ameer* and Missionary in Charge, Maulana Naseem Mahdi Sahib delivered the Friday sermon. After the Friday Prayers, the *Jalsa* program commenced in the late afternoon with the opening remarks of Respected *Ameer Jama'at* USA Dr. Ahsanullah Zafar Sahib, followed by excellent speeches from the men's side relayed to all. Respected *Ameer Sahib* included a special speaker to begin the session this year to highlight how people searching for God think about the process. The young man spoke in Spanish and English about his experience of accepting Islam Ahmadiyyat. Then there were inspiring speeches on Congregational *Salat,* The Divine support of *Khilafat* and The Spread of Ahmadiyyat World Wide. In the evening there was an informative Rishta Nata program for marriageable candidates and their families and a special class for Waqfe Nau. Sadr Lajna Imaillah, Saliha Malik Sahiba, and *Naib Sadr*, Amatul Mussawir Ahmad Sahiba, presided over the girls' *Waqfe Nau* session. The first day of Jalsa concluded with *Maghrib* and *Isha* Prayers.

Ladies Session on Saturday

The ladies held their own program on Saturday presided by *Sadr Lajna* USA, Saliha Malik Sahiba. The recitation and translation of the Holy Qur'an (24:36-39) introduced our main theme: *"Allah is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth..."* and the poem by the Promised Messiah[as] – 'He is the One who sees you all the time'. Then we heard two captivating and informative speeches on "The Attribute of Allah – Al Nur" and "Holy Prophet's[saw] Example of Tolerance". Another poem was beautifully recited emphasizing remembrance of God, followed by two speeches on "Raising Children in Today's World" – one in English on 'The Early Years' and the other in Urdu on 'Preteens and Beyond'. National Secretary *Taleem*, Mubarika Shah Sahiba, announced those members who had qualified for this year's talent awards for outstanding achievements in academics, and those who qualified as certified Holy Qur'an teachers. National Secretary *Muavina Sadr* in charge of Media Watch, Shahina Bashir Sahiba, announced those members from *Lajna* and *Nasirat* for their outstanding participation in *Lajna* Jihad of the Pen activities and they received certificates of appreciation. The morning session concluded with *Zuhr* and *Asr* Payers.

The last session of the day started in the late afternoon with the recitation of the Holy Qur'an (59:19 – 22) reminding us not to forget Allah, followed by the beautiful poem – 'Do not break your Pledge'. This session included two compelling speeches on "Finding God in Everyday Life", which was given from the view point of *Lajna* ages 15 – 25 and "The Road Less Traveled", which was a moving account of one who had accepted Islam Ahmadiyyat. We then heard a group poem, written in English by a member from Columbus, during which the sisters who had accepted Ahmadiyyat in the past year came on the stage to be welcomed by all. *Sadr Lajna Imaillah,* Saliha Malik, gave them each a token of appreciation.

To close the session *Sadr Lajna Imaillah's* speech, **"We have heard a Crier calling unto Faith"** focused on the importance of fully recognizing that the 'Second Coming' has indeed taken place. The signs of the Latter Days are crying for attention that this is the time for the Promised Messiah[as] prophesied by all religions and we are blessed to have accepted him. She said, "The purpose of the coming of the Messiah was to restore faith to the world. Therefore *in our sincere practice his purpose lives on.*" She quoted the Promised Messiah's powerful words:

> "Who is my companion? Who is dear to me? He who recognizes my station... He who is grafted

onto me is grafted onto Him from whom I have come.... I hold a lamp in my hand. Any person who comes to me will certainly partake of the light of this lamp. (The Victory of Islam)

The evening programs included a very well attended 'social' for *Lajna* ages 15 – 25 in which they discussed contemporary and common scenarios involving social life, college life and the Mosque leading to decisions and choices they would face regularly. The girls participated most thoughtfully and shared pizza and cupcakes together. The second day of *Jalsa* concluded with *Maghrib* and *Isha* prayers.

Jalsa Booths

Apart from the program, there were other attractions to *Jalsa Salana.* These included various booths set up for the benefit of our sisters, such as, First-Aid, Homeopathy, Book Stall with a variety of *Jama'at* books available for purchase, *Taqwa, Waqf-e-Nau* – to provide guidance to the *Waqifat* and their mothers and a *Rishta Na'ata* booth to counsel and help mothers with children of marriageable age. This year at short notice several young budding scientists took part in a Science Fair competition, initiated by the men's Science Association. Their entries were very well prepared and presented. The young scientists ranged from ages 7 – 26, so all received a certificate of participation.

As always the Handicraft booth presented an exhibition of arts and crafts. The booth displayed and sold items made especially for the exhibition by Lajna members. Some custom made items from Pakistan were also a part of the huge selection. The booth carried, to name only a few of its attractions - jewelry, clothing, *burqas*, cushion covers, table runners, tea cozies, quilts and *Kaffan* Kits.

Fundraising was also a popular aspect of this *Jalsa.* The busy stalls sold delicious pizza, *kulfi,* soft drinks, water, sports beverages, samosas, *pakora, papri chaat,* candy/snacks and *kabob* rolls.

Closing Session

The *Jalsa* concluded on Sunday, June 30, 2013 with a joint morning session delivered from the men's side and relayed to all. The first important speech centered on *Tarbiyat,* "The Best Model Leading to Divine Mercy and Love". However, the highlight of our *Jalsa* was that our program was then interrupted with the live relay of our beloved Hazoor's[atba] closing address from Germany. Hazoor[atba] delivered his closing address to three countries simultaneously, whose *Jalsas* took part at the same time: Germany, USA and Kababir. It was a most exhilarating feeling to be a part of such an extraordinary moment being united to the *Khalifa-ay-Waqt* in this way. Hazoor[atba] shared moving accounts of how people from all over the world had accepted Ahmadiyyat because of powerful dreams and visions they had had of the Promised Messiah[as] The third day of *Jalsa* was concluded with *Zuhr* and *Asr* prayers.

Alhamdulillah, this Jalsa indeed left a lasting impression on the hearts and minds of all the attendees. The main focus remained the blessed act of attending *Jalsa* to progress spiritually, as worldly concerns diminish in such an atmosphere. However, members also found the opportunity to reconnect with other Ahmadi families from all over the country and from outside of the USA; another important purpose of *Jalsa.* It is our earnest prayer that Allah *Ta'ala* enables us to benefit fully from the bounties and blessings of *Jalsa* USA 2013 throughout the year, *Ameen*!

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HADITH

Hadhrat Qabisah bin Mukhariq[ra] relates that I gave surety for a man that he would pay back the loan taken by him. Then he came to the Messenger[saw] of Alla-h and asked help in the matter. He[saw] said hold on until the charity money comes to us. Then he would order out of it some for him. He then said, "O Qabisah! It is not legal to solicit money except for three people: The one who has taken responsibility to support an afflicted person. He is permitted to solicit money up to the fulfillment of his responsibility and the person who is afflicted with some misfortune which has destroyed his goods. It is lawful for him also to solicit money till he can support a frugal living or he said until he can afford a normal living; the person who is starving due to lack of food and three respected people of the town verify that so and so is starving, he is permitted to solicit money till he can support a frugal living or he said until he can afford a normal living. If anyone other than these three solicits money, he eats that which is unlawful and displeases Allah."

(Muslim kitabuzzakat min tahal lahulmasalah)

THE ATTRIBUTE OF ALLAH— AL NUR

Dhiya Bakr, National Secretary Tabligh, Lajna (Zion)

JazakAllah sisters for reciting so beautifully the Holy Qur'an Chapter: *Surah Al-Nur* verses 36 to 39. It is extremely important that we understand these verses as it relates to Allah and our purpose. In his sermon 'The Divine Attribute of Allah, *Al-Nur* The Light'; Khalifatul Masih V[atba] tells us that Allah is that Being through Whose light a physically blind person sees and a person who has gone astray finds guidance from wisdom that is bestowed by Him. It is that Being Who is apparent and through Whom all things are manifested.'

(Khutba 12/04/09)

"Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth" (Holy Qur'an 24:36): Such a profound statement, un-imaginable for us to fully comprehend. Our subsistence and very being is from the light of Allah. As we know, light allows us to see but it also allows us to grow and comforts us. For what we have been blessed to know is that the stars, moon and sun emit light and we recognize benefits from each. The stars show us that heaven exist and can guide us on a course. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west and also can give comfort. The light of the moon can inspire man with the desire to explore beyond the obvious and the alternation of the moon around the earth has allowed man to calculate time. Also from God's physical light we can receive warmth and nourishment for our vegetation. Light is necessary for green plants to go through photosynthesis and make chlorophyll and glucose and convert poisonous gas (carbon dioxide) to a viable gas called oxygen for us to breathe. Furthermore, Allah has given man the ability to calculate the speed of light: 186,282 miles per second. If you could travel at this speed; you would circle the earth 7.5 times in one second (Dictionary google.com). With all of these physical manifestations of light, their benefits and balance with one another; they become signs of the existence of God and his *Al-Rahman* (Graciousness to us all). Holy Quran 24:36 also states:

> "Allah dispenses His light as He pleases". And following this favor; "He guides to His light whomsoever He wills" (Holy Qur'an 24:36).

Khalifatul Masih V[atba] said; "Everything gets beneficence from God. True light is God, which can be perceived in everything by those with insight. However, one who is devoid of spiritual sight cannot see it. In-order for us to understand the light of Allah, God sends His chosen people who spread the *Nur*/light"

(Khutba 12/04/09).

The verse recited:

> "...His light is as if there were a lustrous niche, wherein is a lamp. The lamp is inside a glass globe. The globe is as it were a glittering star. The lamp is lit from the oil of a blessed tree an olive neither of the East nor of the West...." (Holy Qur'an 24:36)

Khalifatul Masih V[atba] explains that the lamp is the source of light and is referred to as Divine revelation. The glass protects the light and increases it. The glass is the Prophet Muhammad[saw] . Therefore, we are able to witness the light of Allah in observing the Prophet. Also according to Khalifatul Masih V[atba], " The niche (opening) is the breast of Prophet Muhammad[saw]; the glass is the heart of the Prophet[saw]. And the lamp is lit by an oil from a blessed olive tree; the tree is a simile for the person of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]".

So again, we can conclude; we see the light of Allah when we look at the life of the Holy Prophet[saw]. "Light upon light": The light of Allah on the Prophet Muhammad[saw] and reflected by him. Furthermore we are told;

> "Allah sets forth parables to men and Allah knows all things full well" (Holy Qur'an 24:36).

According to the dictionary; parables are allegorical stories designed to illustrate or teach some truth, religious principle or moral lesson.

Lajna Imaillah USA is currently collectively studying the life of the Holy Prophet [saw]. We are learning religious principles and moral lessons demonstrated by the Prophet Muhammad [saw] as he experiences life trials. We see how Allah shines His

light upon the Holy Prophet[saw] and strengthens his spirit and ours as an observer. From Prophet Muhammad's[saw] life, we learn that he suffered the loss of his parents, wives, and children, endured assassination attempts on his life, was exiled from his homeland, fought in military battles, endured persecution and slander of his name and legacy. He also experienced pain for the indecency, injustice and immorality exhibited and suffered by mankind. However, despite these trials, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] continued to fulfill the responsibility given to him by Allah, which was to spread the Nur, the Light of Allah.

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] through Divine revelations taught man how to recognize Allah, live a Godly life, pray, pay zakat and seek the help of Allah through all trials. In particular the revelations speaking to raising a prophet to recite the signs of Allah, give the world a scripture of perfect law, demonstrate the rules of conduct, and inform man that "the path to progress and prosperity for Muslims does not lie in imitating other peoples ways and manners but in strictly following Islam and the Holy Prophet[saw]; came through the Divine revelations of *Surah Al Baraqah* and *Surah Al Imran*. Both of these Surahs are also named the Bright Ones" (Holy Qur'an introduction to *Surah Al Baraqah* and *Al Imran*); again referencing light.

Khalifatul Masih V[atba] said that according to the Promised Messiah[as]; 'The light of high degree that was bestowed on the perfect man (Prophet Muhammad[saw]) was not in angels, stars, moon, sun, oceans, emeralds or any earthly or heavenly object.'

(*Khutba* 12/04/09)

Now the question is; can we too receive this light and become recipients of the favor of Allah? According to Khalifatul Masih V[atba], "The lofty station of *Nur* that the Holy Prophet[saw] was granted was from the light of Allah. The Prophet [saw] conveyed it onto his Companions and established excellent morals among them so much so that he likened them to stars, The blessed Companions partook of a measure of God's light to such an extent that they attained the honor of the salutation; ra zi Allah unho (may Allah be pleased with them). The Promised Messiah [as] wrote that the Companions were so absorbed in the Prophet[saw] that his Nur transferred onto them through their complete obedience of him...."

(*Khutba* 12/04/09).

Allah continued to dispense His Nur, and now has sent to us His *Nur* through the Promised Messiah[as]. Khalifatul Masih V[atba] further stated that, "the Promised Messiah[as] wrote that he did not know what act of his had attracted Divine bestowment. He said that he was only aware of his natural inclination towards God..."

(*Khutba*12/04/09).

Khalifatul Masih V[atba] also stated that, "the Promised Messiah[as] wrote that Allah's light was bestowed on Prophet Muhammad[saw] (The Chosen One) and according to their ranks, upon all those who bore the same color to some degree"

(*Khutba*12/04/09).

Color is defined by the dictionary as the quality of an object with respect to light reflected by the object. Therefore, those who keep company with and emulate the Holy Prophet[saw] and the Promised Messiah [as] can attain some form of their color through adopting their personality, characteristics, behaviors, and demeanor. Khalifatul Masih V[atba] stated; "if one connects with the special people of God, Allah will illuminate one's heart even if one's niche (breast) and globe (heart) are small".

(*Khutba*12/04/09).

In *Surah Al Nur* verses 37, 38 and 39; we learn ways to earn this light. The verses read:

> "This light illumes houses with regard to which Allah has ordained that they be exalted and that His name be remembered in them; Men whom neither merchandise nor traffic diverts from the remembrance of Allah and the observance of prayer and the giving of *Zakat*. So Allah will give them the best reward of their deeds and give them increase out of His bounty" (Holy Qur'an 24:37 -39).

How do we absorb the light of Allah and reflect it? By exemplifying the character of the Holy Prophet[saw] and the Promised Messiah[as], and praying. We also must read the Holy Qur'an and bring the words into living actions.

When we are confronted with difficult trials; they may cause our natural reaction to assume sorrow, disappointment and/or despair. The trials of relationships, raising children, health, and wealth or lack of wealth can cause an individual to lose faith, metaphorically fall off

course and slip into a dark hole. Even when a community, society or nation is confronted with difficult trials they move away from the light of Allah and conflicts occur of ideology, social behavior, or discourse of international proportion. The Holy Qur'an states;

> "And whoso obeys Allah and His Messenger and fears Allah and takes Him as a shield for protection, it is they who will be successful." (Holy Quran 24:53)

Therefore, we as individuals, communities and nations should seek the recourse to call on *Al Nur*, the Light of Allah. Holy Qur'an 14:2, reminds us:

> "*Alif Lam Ra* (I am Allah, Who is All Seeing). This (the Holy Qur'an) is a book which We have revealed to thee that thou mayest bring mankind out of the depths of darkness into light by the command of their Lord to the path of the Mighty, the Praiseworthy." (Holy Qur'an 14:2)

Therefore, Calling on Allah, is how the Holy Prophet[saw] and the tribes/nations around him endured and overcame their trials.

But we should not wait for a trial to seek or receive the light of Allah. We should look for the opportunity to reflect *Nur*. According to Khalifatul Masih V[atba]; "The peace of this world is also associated with the Promised Messiah[as]. He fulfilled the statement of the Holy Prophet[saw] (12/4/09). As I read the statement, you should recite after I read the words 'he will', say out loud "I will". The Promised Messiah[as] fulfilled the statement of the Holy Prophet[saw] that:

> "He will (I will) call the world to love, affection and peace, that he will (I will) establish the dues of God and that he will (I will) illuminate the world with God's light and that he will (I will) be a source of peace for the world."
>
> (*Khutba* 12/4/09)

Hadhrat Musleh Mau'ood[ra] said that three aspects are required to disperse Nur: Divinity, Prophethood and *Khilafat*. As long as believers keep faith and do good works the progression of this *Nur* will continue

(*Khutba* 12/04/09).

Hadhrat Umar bin Al Khattab [ra] relates; "He heard the Messenger of Allah say; I asked Allah about the differences among my Companions. Allah revealed to me: O Muhammad! The status of your companions with Me, is like the stars in the sky. Some are stronger than others. However, everyone has light in him. Notwithstanding their differences, whosoever follows any of them he will be a rightly guided person with me".

(Mishakat Kitabal Manaqib Manaqibassahabah)

As we approach the month of *Ramadan*, Let us pray to God that our character and deeds reflect the colors of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and the Promised Messiah[as]. And pray that we are the recipients of *Al Nur* at a speed in which we collectively as the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community can propagate the *Nur* of Allah around the earth so that it brings people closer to Allah and peace. *Ameen*.

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Murder of Ka'b bin Ashraf

Ka'b bin Ashraf, a Jewish chieftain of *Banu Nadir*, was a poet of considerable fame. Like so many others, he was bitterly hostile to Isla -m. With his fiery poems, he began to incite people to rise up against the Muslims. After the Battle of Badr, he composed a number of eulogies mourning the Meccan chiefs slain in the battle. He used to recite them at every gathering. When he learned about the death of the leaders of the *Quraish* he exclaimed:

"Those were the nobles of Arabia, the kings of mankind. By God, if Muhammad has vanquished these people, the interior of the earth is a better dwelling than the top of it." He contacted Abu Sufyan with a view to making a combined effort to wipe out the Muslims. He openly recited a number of poems derogatory to the Holy Prophet[saw]. As poetry had a high place in the life of the Arabs and could deepen influence and sway feelings, Ka'b bin Ashraf had become not only a nuisance but a serious menace. Ka'b plotted to kill the Holy Prophet[saw].

When the Holy Prophet[saw] came to know about the plot, he consulted his Companions[ra]. The Muslims were so irritated by Ka'b that they unanimously agreed to kill him. Abu Na'ilah undertook this job and when he had the opportunity he and his companions killed Ka'b bin Ashraf.

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THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD'S[saw] EXAMPLE OF TOLERANCE

Wajeeha Choudhary, Philadelphia

Imagine this scene: the triumphant leader of an army marches into his recently conquered city, a place that threw him out years ago. Mounted on a camel, he does not smile proudly nor is his chest puffed in arrogance, knowing that he is the victor. Rather, he is absorbed in prayers, bending so low that his head touches his camel's back. The leaders of the conquered city come to him, trembling with fear and terrified that he would kill them as all conquerors do. But instead, he calls out and says: "Go! You are all free!"

This is not the attitude we would expect of a newly victorious man. And yet this is exactly how our beloved Prophet Muhammad[saw] entered the day the Muslims conquered Mecca. This illustrious, benevolent man walked in to the city that rejected him with a heart full of forgiveness, not revenge. This, my dear sisters, is the topic of my speech today: the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] as the perfect model of tolerance.

From a global perspective, tolerance is the solution to many of our problems. Most wars are grounded in some kind of egotistical reasoning: want for fame, power, wealth or even out of blind hatred for the other. Sadly, many world leaders succumb to these destructive qualities thereby influencing and leading people into a vicious cycle of kill or be killed. For the pessimist, this seems like a hopeless situation. But we are not those pessimists. No, we are Ahmadi Muslims and we strive to see the glass half full, not empty. We are those fortunate ones who have access to a light that is ignored by others. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an,

> "O Prophet! Truly We have sent thee as a Witness, and a Bearer of glad tidings, and a Warner, And as a Summoner unto Allah by His command, and as a light-giving Lamp" (Al-Ahzab, 46-47).

Let's take a moment to think about this imagery – the Prophet[saw] is a light-giving Lamp, the perfect personification of the attributes of Allah. It is through his example, the way he lived his life, that we gain insight as to how to live ours.

When we reflect on the many trials our beloved Prophet endured, we are left in admiration and awe. From the day he was born, the Holy Prophet[saw] was the exemplar of tolerance and patience. He never knew his father, who died six months before his birth. His mother passed when the Prophet Muhammad [saw] was a merely six years old, followed by the death of his beloved grandfather only two years later. Given his material conditions as an orphan, he could have easily turned to a destructive lifestyle. But God had greater plans for His messenger, signs of which were apparent during his childhood, as the Prophet[saw] is described as a gentle, kind-hearted and cooperative boy.

Later in life, upon his claim of prophethood, he was brutally persecuted, and yet his demeanor never wavered from resolute steadfastness and patience. One old woman had made a habit of throwing garbage on the Prophet Muhammad[saw] on a regular basis whenever he passed by her house on his way to the masjid. Despite this, he would pass silently without showing any anger or annoyance. One day when the HolyProphet Muhammad[saw] was passing by, the woman was not there to throw the garbage so he stopped and asked the neighbor about her wellbeing. The neighbor informed him that the woman was desperately sick and confined to her bed. The Prophet Muhammad[saw], politely asking permission to visit the old woman, entered the house. The old woman thought that he had come there to take his revenge when she was unable to defend herself because of her sickness. But Prophet Muhammad assured her that he had come to her, not to take any revenge, but to see her and to look after her needs. She was greatly moved by this love and kindness of Prophet Muhammad[saw].

Pause for a moment and consider if this situation occurred right now. What would we do? Cause a scene, yell and scream at the perpetrator, or perhaps even avoid the situation altogether and hide in a corner instead? We see this today in the world – where Islam is being attacked from all sides, its founder unfairly besmirched – and see what results you

get when not following the example of the Prophet Muhammad[saw]. On the one hand, extremists who call themselves Muslims, are committing atrocities that are antithetical to the very name of Islam. And on the other hand, other Muslims are leaving their faith behind, afraid of being associated with Islam. But we, my dear sisters, are Ahmadi Muslims, and we adopt the middle path. Like the Prophet Muhammad[saw] endured the onslaughts of garbage every day, we too will be patient.

Not only did the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] resist the temptation to retaliate, he never even wished for calamity to befall his attackers and enemies. In the early days of Islam, the Prophet[saw] traveled to Ta'if in the hopes of spreading the message of one true God. Instead, the tribal chiefs rejected him and the town's folk thought him to be a nuisance, so they set vagabonds of the town and street boys at him who pelted the Prophet[saw] with stones and ran him out of the town. The Prophet[saw] was so injured that blood dripped profusely from his wounds. Angel Gabriel came to him and said: "Allah has heard what your people say to you and how they reject you. He has ordered the angels of the mountains to obey whatever you tell them to do." The angel of the mountains called him, greeted him and said, "Send me to do what you wish. If you wish, I will crush them between two mountains." The Holy Prophet[saw] said: "No. I hope that of these very tormentors would be born those who would worship the One True God" (*Al-Bukhari*).

Even his companions would ask the Holy Prophet [aw] why he would not curse his opponents who became increasingly vicious in their persecution. At this the Holy Prophet[saw] replied: "I have not been sent to lay a curse upon men but to be a blessing to them" (*Muslim*). Indeed, what a blessing he is for us – sent as a mercy for all of humanity.

Just think, sisters. Imagine if this happened to you – driven out of a town so brutally. The average person would, at the very least, curse the attackers and perhaps even plot revenge. But not the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw]. He did not worry about how badly he been rejected, dishonored and disgraced – did not care about his bleeding feet. He only cared that one day, maybe, just maybe, his tormentors would find God. How many of us today can put the hope for the spiritual advancement of others above our own injuries, pains and worries? This is the pinnacle of tolerance. As the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] once said: patience in the face of a hurt increases one's honor. Whether pelted by stones or verbally abused, the Prophet[saw] never wavered in his steadfastness, thereby granting him the status of the most honorable. If we too hope to increase our honor, we must adopt the principles of tolerance taught by the Holy Prophet[saw].

Tolerance is built from the ground up. If we want the Muslim *Ummah* to be known as the most tolerant people on Earth, we must begin with our own lives.

And this is not something we can do just on our own. As narrated by Abu Musa: The Holy Prophet[saw] said: A faithful believer to another faithful believer is like a building whose different parts strengthen each other.

Sisters, in order for us to succeed in creating more a tolerant and compassionate world, we have to work together. This structure will come tumbling down if we do not erect a sturdy foundation. And these foundations are most apparent in our interpersonal relationships: kinship, family, husband and wife, mother and child, friend to friend. But you may ask, if the task is so simple – if we just need to get along with one another, why all the fuss? What gets in the way?

Arrogance.

Arrogance has a way of sneaking up on you, and slowly building and increasing as time goes on. In many ways, arrogance is rooted in our own insecurities. Sometimes we find it hard to admit the other person is right and we stubbornly continue in our wrong ways. I'm sure plenty of us have at least witnessed, or even perhaps been in engaged, in a situation where an Auntie has reprimanded a younger woman for not dressing according to the standards of purdah. In this hypothetical situation, the Auntie may be rude and domineering and the younger woman may act defiant and ignore the advice. In this instance, both parties defy the guidelines of Prophet Muhammad who said "One who had no compassion for our young ones and did not recognize the rights of our elders was not one of us"

(*Abu Dawud*)

In such situations, we consider ourselves better or more knowledgeable than others. We have a hard time holding our tongue, desperate to get in the last word so that we do not appear weak or foolish. To the contrary, the Holy Prophet[saw] said "Wisdom is observing silence, but there are few who practice it" (Baihiqi Sh'ad al-Iman, Hadith 5027).

So by this definition, how many of us are wise? How many of us observe silence, hold back our emotions when they try to get the best of us? How often in an argument do we settle down, take a break, observe patience? Hazooor[aba] has pointed out to us that the lack of tolerance in people is one of the main causes for marriages to fall apart. When we only value our wants and demands over the preservation of our relationship, we allow the ego to control us. We may feel that momentary satisfaction of getting our way, but sacrificing humility comes at a heavier price that we may or may not pay in this life, but certainly in the hereafter.

Sometimes, even in our silence, even when our lips are sealed, arrogance creeps in. It is the way we conduct ourselves, our mannerisms and attitudes. The wealthy may be forgetful of the poor, and the poor may be envious of the wealthy. And what for? For want of material goods, to wear the trendiest outfits, to dangle designer handbags from your shoulder? I am not saying that owning and wearing beautiful and expensive things is inherently wrong, rather they are accompanied by a greater responsibility to keep one's ego in check. It's easy to lose yourself in our material goods, occupation, societal status, education. Materialism has a vicious way of absolutely consuming us. We feel that we worked hard to own these things and occupy these positions, and that therefore we have some unspoken right to walk with our noses in the air.

If we reflect on these moral risks that we take when immoderately indulging in material desires, Holy Prophet Muhammad's[saw] choice of leading a simple life makes so much sense. So modest and austere were his lodgings, that Hadhrat Umar[ra] narrates: "I went into a small room which was occupied by the Holy Founder of Islam[saw]. He was lying on a straw bedding so rough in nature that on the side he was leaning, I saw straw marks all over his body. I scanned the room and it was empty, there was nothing except for a small bucket for water and one or two odd things. I knew him to be the most beloved of God, a person who had reached the summit of humanity. This contrast so overwhelmed me with sorrow that I started to cry. The Holy Prophet[saw] turned to me and said: "Umar, what has ailed thee?" I said: "O Messenger of God, God loves you so much, you are the best ever created by Him, yet I see you in this state of extreme austerity. You don't have proper bedding, you don't have any articles to decorate your house, there is nothing." The Holy Prophet[saw] smiled and said: "Umar, would you prefer worldly things of this life to what is in store for us by God in the life to come?" Umar[ra] replied: "Surely the things to come will be better".

Indeed, better things can and do come to those who are patient, tolerant of their lot in life and make the best of it. Our lives are complicated as is. Why bother cluttering them even more? We engage in this rat race, trying to one up one another, but to what end? As the Holy Prophet[saw] reminds us:

"The strong one is not he who knocks out others in wrestling; the strong one is he who keeps control over himself when he is aroused" (Bukhari, Kitab-al-Adab).

In reviewing the incidents and words of advice of the Holy prophet, I have come to reflect on my own life. I can say, for myself at least, that I have learned so much in this process – I hope you have too. May Allah grant us the opportunity to bask in the beneficent light of the Prophet Muhammad. May we be inspired to emulate his example and correct our ways.

I would like to conclude with a couplet from the poetry of Hadhrat Nawab Mubaraka Begum Sahiba[ra], the daughter of the Promised Messiah[as]:

Bhaij Durood us Mohsin par tu din main so so baar
Pak Muhammad Mustafa Nabiyaan ka Sardar

Send *Durood* upon that beneficent one, hundreds upon hundreds of times;
Holy Prophet Muhammad Mustafa, the chief of all prophets

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّ عَلٰى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا
صَلَّيْتَ عَلٰى اٰلِ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ اِنَّكَ حَمِيْدٌ مَّجِيْدٌ
اَللّٰهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّ عَلٰى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا
بَارَكْتَ عَلٰى اٰلِ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ اِنَّكَ حَمِيْدٌ مَّجِيْدٌ

RAISING CHILDREN INTODAY'S WORLD

Sadaf Ijaz, San Diego

Respected *Sadr Sahiba* and my dear sisters, I have always enjoyed this quote:

"Children are natural mimics who act like their parents despite every effort to teach them good manners."

Think about it. Raising children is a very difficult task. It is even more difficult to tell others how to bring up their children. I am definitely no authority. I will only attempt to relate some of my experiences and some of the guidance given to us by our spiritual leaders. The answer does not lie in reading about every pop psychologist and in trying to Google it. We may think so, but Google does not have the answer to everything. Our sources should be the Holy Qur'an, the *Hadith,* the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw], the example of the Promised Messiah[as], the numerous advice of our *Khulafa*, our literature, and finally our most practical source is mothers who have been through this experience.

It is narrated on the authority of Hadhrat 'Abdullah bin 'Umar[rz]: I heard the Holy Prophet[saw] say: "Each one of you is responsible and each one of you will be asked about his (or her) dependents." (*Sahih Bukhari, Hadith* No. 853)

We should not ever shrug off advice and should not be offended when someone offers advice. The parenting books that we read can help us, but they cannot be a substitute for experienced mothers who can give us practical advice. However, it is always important to use wisdom when seeking help. There are a lot times when we are not sure how to handle a situation and in such circumstances it is best to ask for help from someone who has been in a similar situation and whom you know will be able to guide you effectively. Talk to a mother that you can see is handling her children with a lot of patience.

Please don't lose sight of the ultimate goal. We wish for children who have the love of Allah who possess a sense of purpose, who are dedicated, truthful, motivated and have a sense of identity. A lot of times we mothers become impatient or embarrassed if our children misbehave in the mosque and stop bringing them. This is not really the solution. If our child is disrupting the gathering we can always shorten our stay. We can come for a short time and then increase the duration of our stay every successive time we come. This is truly a tried and tested method that works.

Children are very fast learners, we should not underestimate them. They will eventually learn how to conduct themselves and as they grow older their ties and bonds with the *Jama'at* will grow stronger. So take the children to the mosque for events as much as possible. My fondest memories are going to *Lajna* events, *Jalsas,* and to the mosque with my mother. I remember it as a unique experience and I cannot imagine not being in such gatherings now that I've grown older, and I cannot imagine my daughters not being in such gatherings either. Please remember that our children are assimilating messages from their surroundings constantly.

In his address to *Lajna* USA on June 29th, 1991, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] said:

"The most potent advice I can render to you is to become godly in your conduct and to be consistent and true in your words and actions. It is then and only then that you will gain a powerful influence over your children and they will follow you to whatever destiny you want to lead them. Remember that duplicity and duality are lethal passions, which mar, destroy, and kill what could have been a healthy relationship between a mother and a child. You may talk of your conduct and honesty and chastity and truth as much as you please, but your children will always be intently watching your own hidden image reflected in your own personal way of life and will be led only by that image."

Then he said in the same address:

".....intelligent parents give a long rope to their children in ordinary affairs of life, whereby children acquire a sense of freedom and pleasure and believe themselves to be masters in their own homes. Yet the parents create a wall of noble principles around them which would not be broken or trifled with. The freedom they give to the children is only relative and ends where the wall of discipline begins.

Therefore it is like freedom provided to animals in modern open zoos. An impression is created for the animal that lives in them without a tormenting awareness of confinement."

This is an amazing example given by him. If you have a chance to visit the San Diego Zoo you will know exactly what he is talking about.

From infancy to until they become teens—these are the most important years in a child's life and this is the focus of my speech today. These are very crucial years and if we provide them with the essential tools at this stage they will benefit tremendously for the rest of their life. Even if they waver or slide off the path they will be able to find their way back. These years and habits will become imprinted on their minds and they will always come back, *Insha Allah.*

In this age of technology we seem to have passed on our responsibilities. Many times we lean on these gadgets. It is fine when it is used in moderation. But we have to remember that there is a price to all this. Nothing can replace the interaction that a parent can provide. Not only that, but iPads and such other devices are very interactive and hence quite addictive, unlike television which was easy to turn off. So we have to set time limits and set up filters for appropriate content. Also, doctors caution against the use of hand held devices at a very early age for very young kids. These kids become used to constant movement, but the world around them is not moving at such a constant speed, and so this makes them impatient and frustrated. Not only that, but they cannot sit still. As they grow older they become isolated. Computers and such other electronics should be kept in a common area. Children should not be allowed to take such things into their bedroom and even parents should avoid keeping them in the bedroom.

Our responsibility starts with the birth if the child. The *Adhan* is the first reminder to the parents that the life they led before this, only being concerned with their own selves, is now over. It is the continuation of the same spirit of sacrifice that we display when we are married. There is a small window of opportunity for us to make our mark before the environment and its influences take over. Everything taught in the lap of the mother will have a lasting influence. These are small steps but they become part of the child's subconscious. Saying *Bismillah* and other small prayers is one example. Teaching the *Salat* and reciting the Holy Qur'an daily is another practice to follow. Once they become regular in their Prayers it will become like second nature to them. This is the time to create an attachment to Allah. They may not understand fully but when we show our gratefulness and appreciation they will follow, *Insha Allah.*

It is a practice with some mothers to wait until the child is sleeping before they perform *Salat.* This is not a good idea. If they never see us pray, it is more difficult for them to follow our example. It is more effective to observe *Salat* in their presence—even more effective than telling them. Reading the verses aloud is also helpful. Repetition is the key. Every night instead of lullabies we can recite prayers and without any conscious effort on our part, our child will have memorized it.

In his address to *Lajna* Germany on June 26th, 2010, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] said:

"In homes where Prayer is offered with its due respect, there children as young as one and a half to two years, in their own innocent way, offer Prayer, prostrate, and in their baby talk even say *"Allah Akbar"*. If it is a little girl, she takes a small *dupatta* on her head and stands on the prayer mat; and if it is a little boy, he wears a cap and stands on the prayer mat. They are not even aware of what Prayer is, but they are observing the gestures of their parents. It is a habit, which is being inculcated in them subconsciously. This habit then goes on to develop a bond with Allah Almighty in the generations to come."

We are their role models in this stage of their life. They are constantly watching us. It is not possible to tell the child to be quiet and then turn around and start talking ourselves. Also, we cannot isolate ourselves from the community. Some mothers think that the child is passing through a phase and thus they avoid all activities in the mosque. Actually, this is not the answer either. Interaction with others helps children in a much more positive way.

Although it is very early and they are young, we have to start talking about our values and what is important to us. If we don't have this conversation with them, they will seek it from others outside. Children have a natural curiosity and inquisitiveness and we should not try to suppress it. My husband's mother from a very young age told him that it was not okay to have girlfriends. She would tell him repeatedly that when the time comes they will find a good Ahmadi Muslim girl for

him. She told him he needs to focus on his studies and not get distracted. It may seem early to start having these talks, but in reality it is not. These days very young children start talking about dating and relationships.

When we try to discipline our children it is important to give them an option and a reason instead of just saying no. It is very important to keep the lines of communication open. They need to know that they can come to us with whatever question they have, and if we are unable to answer we will find someone who can provide a satisfactory answer. It is not easy but we can succeed with patience and constant prayer.

This is what the Promised Messiah[as] said regarding corporal punishment:

"Beating of children is an act which can be termed as a sort of polytheism (*shirk*). It actually means that the ill-tempered person makes himself a partner of God in giving guidance and sustaining the creatures. I wish that, instead of punishing children parents would resort to prayer, and would make it a habit to supplicate earnestly for their children as the supplications of the parents for their children are particularly accepted by God." (*Malfoozat,* vol. 2, p. 4)

There has to be a balance in the upbringing of children. Too much leniency or too much harshness can have an equally harmful effect.

At this point I would like to describe briefly the remarkable forbearance of the Promised Messiah[as] related by Hadhrat Maulvi Abdul Karim[rz] in "Character of the Promised Messiah[as] – 1924". He states that the Promised Messiah[as] would be sitting in his room with the doors closed, engaged in writing a book or in meditation when one of his children would knock heavily at the door saying, "*Abba*, open the door." Immediately he would rise and open the door. But this did not happen just once. The child would come again and again and ask him to open the door; again and again the Promised Messiah[as] would open the door without a wrinkle on his face and without even asking why he troubles him in this way and interferes with his work. He relates that once this happened twenty times but the Promised Messiah[as] never once uttered a word of rebuke. This is a father – imagine what is expected of us mothers.

In his address to *Lajna* Canada on July 6th, 1991 Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh] said:

"So instill the aggression of love in your children for Islam. If you are successful in doing this then you can have complete faith that your children will always triumph over adverse surroundings. There is no power in the world that would be able to overcome them because, in reality, there is no power equal to the aggression of love and who else can appreciate it better that you, the mothers. Allah has placed it in your nature and Islam needs those mothers who can raise their children in this manner."

Parenting requires a specific set of skills and these skills can only be acquired through diligence and prayer. There cannot be any extremes in bringing up children, and we have to have a balance in the upbringing of boys and girls. It is not correct to show preference over one child and make comparisons, whether a boy or girl. Please remember when we talk to them about modesty it is important to have this conversation with both of them. For example, boys and girls both need to know that wearing tank tops and shorts is not the proper Islamic way.

Thus we have to create a balance in everything. We cannot be seen neglecting their needs or over indulging their preferences. We cannot provide them unlimited trust or look at each and every action of theirs with suspicion. So we need to understand that it is all right to counsel them but then it is not ok to constantly pester them. It is fine to oversee what they are doing, but not as if we are looking over their shoulder and snooping.

Parenting is very difficult but I can assure you it is really rewarding. Children test us in every possible way, and so we need to have patience, humility, selflessness, and control over our anger, diplomacy, and best of all Allah's help.

I will end with these verses that also serve as a warning:

In the Holy Qur'an in chapter 17, verse 32, the injunction "Slay not your children for fear of poverty" does not necessarily mean failing to provide for their physical comforts; it can also mean that if we ignore inculcation of good moral qualities among our children and neglect their spiritual education, we will be virtually committing their murder.

In Chapter 66, verse 7 Allah says, "O ye who believe! Save yourselves and your families from a fire."

This was explained by Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[atba] in his Friday sermon on April 23[rd], 2010. (I am paraphrasing here). He said that it is essential to attach our boys and girls to the system of *Jama'at* and its auxiliaries by being fully committed ourselves. If parents show any slackness in this regard, they are setting a bad example and laying the foundation for their and their children's future loss and dis-connection from *Jama'at*. It is incumbent on parents to save their progeny from the fire just as Allah saved them and thier elders.

May Allah enable us to follow the guidance of our Imam and help us in the proper upbringing of our future generations, *Ameen*.

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The Oath of Ridwan
(Bai'at-e-Ridwan)

Since nothing was decided during 'Urwah's visit, the Holy Prophet[saw] sent Hadhrat Kharash bin Umayyah to the *Quraish*. The *Quraish*, in anger, killed the mount of Kharash bin Umayyah and tried to kill him also. However, he was able to escape from the place and return safely. Then, the Holy Prophet[saw] sent Hadhrat Uthman with a message to the *Quraish*. The *Quraish* detained him. Meanwhile the rumor spread in the area that Hadhrat Uthman had been killed by the *Quraish*. When this news reached the Holy Prophet[saw] he said that they must take revenge of Uthman's death. At that time, the Holy Prophet[saw] took an oath of allegiance under an acacia tree and this oath is called the "*Bai'at-e-Ridwan* (Oath of *Ridwan*)".

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HADITH

Hadhrat Zirr ibni Hubaish[ra] relates: "I went to Safwan bin 'Assal[ra] to inquire about the (symbolic) passing of the hands over socks in the course of ablutions. He said: 'O Zirr, what brings you?' I replied: 'Search of the knowledge.' He said: 'The Angels spread their wings for the seeker of knowledge out of pleasure at what he seeks.' I told him: 'Some doubt has arisen in my mind concerning the passing of hands over socks in the course of ablution after one has been to the privy or the urinal. You are one of the Companions of the Holy Prophet[saw] and I have come to ask you: 'Did you hear him[saw] mention anything concerning it?' He replied: 'Yes. He[saw] used to direct us that while we were on a journey or were travelers we need not take off our socks for washing the feet in the course of ablutions during a period of three days and nights, except after consorting with our wives. But in case of sleep, a visit to the privy or urinal we can do so. I then asked him: 'Did you hear him[sa] say anything concerning love?' He replied: 'We were with the Messenger[saw] of Allah in the course of a journey when a desert Arab called out to him in a loud rough voice: 'O Muhammad!' The Messenger[sa] of Allah answered him in almost the same tone: 'Here I am.' I said to the Arab: 'Fie on you, lower your voice, because you are in the presence of the Holy Prophet[saw] and you have been commanded to refrain from this.' He retorted: 'By Allah, I will not lower my voice; and then addressing the Holy Prophet[saw] the Nomad Arab said: 'What about a person who loves a people but has not yet found himself in their company?' The Holy Prophet[saw] answered: 'On the Day of Judgment a person will be in the company of those he loves.' "

(Tirmidhi kitabudda'awat bab ma ja' fi fadlittaubah)

Hadhrat Abu Dharr[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "When a Muslim and *Mo'min* person makes his ablution and washes his face the water or the last drop of water carries away all sins committed by his eyes, and when he washes his hands the water or the last drop of water carry away all sins committed by his hands and when he washes his feet the water or the last drop of water carries away all sins towards which he had walked, and he emerges cleansed of all his sins."

(Muslim bab khurujul khataya- ma'a ma'al wudu')

Hadhrat 'Uthman bin 'Affan[ra] relates: "The Messenger[saw] of Allah said: 'He who makes his ablution carefully will find that his faults depart from his body, even from below his nails.' "

(Muslim kitabuttaharat bab khurujul khataya ma'a ma'al wudu')

FINDING GOD IN EVERYDAY LIFE

Salma Azam, Research Triangle Majilis, North Carolina

(Speaking on behalf of Lajna ages 15 – 25)

Dear Respected *Sadr Sahiba* and distinguished guests, and beloved sisters, *Assalaamoalaikum wa Rahmatullahe wa Barakaatohou.*

I don't know how many of you are familiar with the story of the sea turtles, but from a very young age, I have always been immensely astounded by it. Days after hatching and burrowing out of the sand, baby sea turtles, aided by no one and nothing save the bright horizon of the ocean to orient themselves, instinctively scuttle towards the sea. Years later, when the females are ready to lay eggs themselves, they miraculously return from immense distances, up to 1400 miles, to the exact stretch of beach where they were born. Scientists have long been confounded by this navigational feat of the animal kingdom, by the turtles' ability to successfully locate their hatching ground regardless of all the disorienting currents, vastness of the ocean, and complete lack of indicating landmarks to guide them. Like these turtles, we too have an innate desire to seek and to find, but in our case, it is not a small stretch of beach along an infinite coastline, but rather our Supreme and Mighty Creator, our God. Yet, we seem to be much more easily swept off course by disorienting currents, causing us to lose our way. I would like then, for us to direct our attention towards how we can go about setting ourselves back on course, so that we do not so easily get lost. I would like us to consider how we can go about Finding God in Everyday Life.

Ironically, it is often easiest for us to find Allah when we are in times of great distress or discomfort – if we find our lives threatened or have experienced a great loss, for example. But Allah reminds us full well that this alone will not suffice when he says in chapter 10, verse 13 of the Holy Qur'an,

> "And when trouble befalls a man, he calls on Us, lying on his side, or sitting, or standing; but when We have removed his trouble from him, he goes his way as though he had never called on Us for the *removal of the* trouble that befell him. Thus it is that the doings of the extravagant are given a fair appearance in their eyes." (Holy Qur'an 10:13)

Thus, Allah has cautioned us against searching for and remembering Him only when we are desperate. Upon deep reflection, however, we find that the world is so greatly satiated with beauty, love and majesty, that to find Allah everywhere we look is truly not that difficult, even in the uneventful experiences of our day-to-day lives.

When we are trying to find someone, there are two reasons why we would do so – one is that the one we are looking for has wandered off, and the other is that we ourselves have strayed from where we are supposed to be. I can assure you sisters, that in our case, it is most certainly not Allah who is waiting in some unexpected place. Rather, it is we who, without realizing it, have misplaced ourselves and allowed ourselves to become alienated from him. Hadhrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad[ra], son of the Promised Messiah (as) wrote in his book, *Our God,*

> "After analyzing the state of their own hearts and of their fellows, can they honestly say that they all truly believe in God? I speak not of superficial or inherited ritual, but of true and living faith. Do they feel and experience the existence of God as they feel and experience the material and tangible things of this world? Are they as certain about the existence of God as they are about the existence of the sun, the moon, the mountains, the rivers, their houses, their ancestors, and their friends? If not, then understand it well that we cannot consider their faith to be true. They are not in the least certain about the existence of God, and can be likened to those who hold on to a zombie imagining it to be alive."

The word 'zombie' has not been used lightly by the author. I have two younger brothers, and through them I have been made aware of this current infatuation that popular culture has with zombies, known as creatures of the 'living dead' that for all purposes appear similar to humans, but are devoid of the heart, soul, compassion,

and emotions of one. Perhaps the tenets of popular culture have picked up on this idea that many of us are idly wandering about without truly accomplishing any purpose other than wreaking havoc and destruction – in our case, however, we are not eating the essential organs of other human beings, but instead are allowing our spiritual organs – our souls and our hearts and our minds, to slowly decay from a lack of participating in the love and remembrance of Allah. Even the Holy Prophet[saw] remarked that:

> "The comparison between a person who remembers his Lord and the one who does not do so, is like that of the living and the dead" (related by Hadhrat Abu Musa Ash'ari).

Let us now, then, go through the routine aspects of our day-to-day life, and determine how we can find and love Allah in all that we do.

I think of when I first wake up in the morning, have said my prayers, and am preparing to venture out into the world. Oftentimes, when people wish to have something to remind them of a beloved, they carry something with them, a trinket or token of sorts that they can always have for reassurance if they are ever feeling lost or alone – think, for example, of a young woman who always wears a locket that her now deceased father gave to her when she was a child. Although Allah is always near and ever living, we can nonetheless sometimes find ourselves feeling distanced from Him throughout the day. But we, as Ahmadi Muslim women, have been prescribed in the Holy Qur'an to carry a trinket, an adornment with us at all times that we can physically feel the comfort of on our skin to remind us of the One that we should love above all else. That trinket is the adornment of *purdah*. As human beings, we are in constant need of physical reassurance – like a crying child reaching for the comfort of his mother in the dark of night – and as we travel about in our lives, Allah's caress of purdah is what continuously brings us back to Him throughout the day. If we constantly carry this adornment gifted to us by Allah, how then could we lose Him?

Now, like most people my age, if I'm leaving the house, the first and foremost reason is because I am on my way to school. Studying is as integral to my daily life as eating and sleeping (and oftentimes takes precedence). As I delve into science, mathematics, literature, and history, it is not difficult to find Allah in the complexity of nature or the brilliance of the human mind. I remember reading long, complicated novels, for example *Emma* by Jane Austen, and thinking to myself, how brilliant, how amazing that a mind can accomplish a feat as extraordinary as writing a book, especially in a time such as the 18th century when all of the writing was done by hand! Similarly, when reading my math textbooks, I would read about for example how a mathematician would at the age of 17 develop some advanced mathematical formula, and it would always leave me in awe of the miraculous, almost superhuman intellectual accomplishments of others, making me realize how unlimited Allah is in His capability to gift us with as little or as much intellectual insight as He wishes. I received my undergraduate degree in biology, and even when I learned about various processes in cells and the human body, I found myself astounded by the great organization and beauty with which Allah has constructed the various pathways and mechanisms of life, and it made me realize that this grand scheme, this master plan that is life, cannot be something that is self-evident, or created on its own - it is rather the result of a magnificent mastermind, the ultimate Creator and Fashioner. In chapter 57, verse 5 of the Holy Qur'an, Allah explains how He has created life, and the world in general, within an organized and structured system when He states:

"He it is Who created the heavens and the earth in six periods, then He settled Himself on the Throne. He knows what enters the earth and what comes out of it, and what comes down from heaven and what goes up into it. And He is with you wheresoever you may be. And Allah sees all that you do." (Holy Qur'an 57:5)

However, regardless of how easily I recognize and happily find Allah in the complex beauty of science and learning, that doesn't mean that I don't oftentimes find myself frustrated with that complexity! The thing that my friends and I most often said to each other in college was, 'why is everything so hard?!' But, those somewhat tortuous times when I was up late trying to cram my head full of biology or put together an essay, were also the times when I would most realize that everything truly is in Allah's hands, and as He says in chapter 59, verse 23 of the Holy Qur'an,

"He is Allah, and there is no God beside Him, the Knower of the

unseen and the seen. He is the Gracious, the Merciful." (Holy Qur'an 59:23)

Allah is the source of all knowledge and intelligence and thus, even at times when I was feeling overwhelmed by studying, it was then that I could and would have to find Allah, because I knew that He alone has the power to endow me with as little or as much knowledge and intellectual insight as He wishes.

In addition to the material that I have been studying, I have found Allah within the very environment in which I learn. I have been blessed the last few years to be attending classes at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and like many college campuses, there is a tangible sense of eagerness of all of those around me to accomplish something extraordinary. On my campus, that eagerness is to serve humanity and improve the quality of life of others. My classmates had all seemed to take up the responsibility of fulfilling *Haqooqul Ibad*, or the rights of mankind. Along with *Haqooqullah*, or the rights of Allah, this is one of our primary responsibilities as described in the Holy Qur'an. On campus, when I spoke with other students or read in the school newspaper about various projects that students were participating in, I was always struck by how Allah has endowed us all with the ability to exhibit unlimited kindness and compassion, and an unparalleled ability to love. Allah has said that His attributes are all the most perfect and most beautiful, but that we can often find His attributes within each other. I absolutely attest that I have been delighted to find the beauty of Allah within my colleagues in university, among those people who are most eager to serve humanity. Indeed, this desire to serve humanity is what propelled me to pursue my own education, and has helped me to find Allah within the frequently grueling life of constantly studying for tests and completing endless assignments, because it filled my life with a sense of purpose. The Promised Messiah[as] wrote:

"Moral states are not something entirely distinct from spiritual states. Moral states become spiritual when they are combined with absolute devotion to God, complete purification of the self, cutting asunder from the world, turning wholly to God with perfect love, complete devotion, full serenity, contentment, and complete accord with Divine Will. Natural states alone do not make man worthy of praise until they take on a moral complexion, because these states can also be found in other animals and even in physical matter."

Thus, although to be good to others is praiseworthy, it is to be good to others while remembering and trying to find Allah, and for the sake of Allah alone, that will truly serve to elevate our status in His sight and allow us to make Him a part of our life.

One of the most influential aspects of my life has undoubtedly been my interaction with my 5 younger brothers and sisters, who now range from 13 to 5 years old. I often find that particularly when I am out at the park with them, I begin contemplating Allah and all of His bounties. I feel the sun shining on my face and the wind blowing in the trees, lifting my spirits as I observe Allah in the beauty of nature and the warmth of His Light. When I see how quickly and without hesitation my brothers and sisters make friends with the children around them, I am always overwhelmed by the perfect innocence with which children love and accept each other unconditionally. It reminds me of the manner in which Allah unconditionally loves and accepts us, so long as we strive to do our best for His sake. It is as if we were all born Godly, but then unfortunately with the passage of time and the loss of our childhood, some of that innocence and beauty wore away as we began to occasionally drift from Allah. Similarly, when I hear the laughter of my siblings as they play; something, which sounds to me like pure, unadulterated joy, I feel as if the Beauty and Light of Allah is emanating from them. Spending time with my brothers and sisters, or any children, is oftentimes one of the ways in which I feel most connected to Allah, because I feel that it is through them that we see Allah in His most pure form. For example, as I was preparing this speech, I asked my 9 year old sister, "Sofia, how do we find God in everyday life?" She thought for a moment and then simply responded, "Well, you say *Salat*, because just like if someone is calling you, and you would come to them; if you call Allah, He will come to you." More often than not, when I talk to my siblings about religion, or teach them prayers, my heart opens up and fills with the love of Allah, because I am finding Allah so that I can share Him with them. Furthermore, the unconditional love that I receive from my siblings and my family has made me feel as if I am directly experiencing the love of Allah, as if He is providing me with the gift of His care

through others. Thus, through the beauty of the human relationships that I experience in my everyday life, I feel as if God is reaching out towards me, and that by partaking of those relationships, I am reaching out towards Him.

In addition to all of this, Allah has Himself prescribed daily obligations that we must fulfill in order to ensure that we do not forget Him. We have been commanded to set aside part of our day not once, not twice, but five times a day to worship Allah, the most straightforward manner in which we can find Him. But do we fulfill this obligation faithfully? William Arthur Ward once said, "God gave you a gift of 86,400 seconds today. Have you used one to say 'thank you'?"

If we wish to make Allah an integral part of our daily life, then we should not fail to heed His words of advice with regards to how we should spend our days. We have the example of the Holy Prophet (saw) who found any excuse to praise Allah and find Him in any occurrence – it is related that whenever the first raindrops began to descend after a dry season, he would put out his tongue to catch a raindrop and exclaim: "Here is the latest favor from my Lord."' Women, too, have shown us how every second of every day must be spent in trying to find and remember Allah. In the book *Hadhrat Amma Jaan: An Inspiration for Us All*, we learn that the wife of the Promised Messiah (as) was never silent – if she was not speaking to another person, she was always uttering a prayer. Thus we can see that there should never be a moment wasted in idleness; instead, we should be focused on reaching out to Allah and finding Him in every action, thought, and occurrence around us. This is what is so beautiful about Islam and why we are so blessed to have it. It is a life force, a driving force that is meant to consume our every thought and our every action. Its teachings are not something that we should only consider when we enter a mosque, or attend a *Jalsa*. It teaches us that our love of Allah is meant to infuse everything we say and everything we do. *Hence, to find Him is simply to Love Him and to allow that love to pervade our being.*

When I think back to those sea turtles whose extraordinary journey I first related to you, I almost envy them, because they are so sure of their destination and so set in their journey. Although we, as Ahmadi Muslim women, are also as sure of our destination, it is sometimes more difficult for us to figure out how to get there. However, it is important for us to remember that when it comes to Allah, there is no such thing as "in vain." In this world of temporary pleasures and delights, as well as sudden downfalls and disappointments, we should be reassured to know that, in our constant effort to find Allah, so long as we are equipped with strong and sincere hearts, we cannot fail, Insha'Allah.

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PAY ZAKAT

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HADITH

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "While Hadhrat Job[as] was bathing naked, golden locusts started to rain down. He began to collect the locusts. His Lord, the most Honored and Glorious called him, 'O Job, Did not I give you everything and make you self-sufficient not to need what you see?' Job[as] answered, 'Indeed. By Your Honour! It is correct but there is no richness from Your Blessings or who can dispense with Your Blessings.' "

(Bukhari kitabul anbiya' bab wa Ayyub idha nada rabbihi)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "Look at one who is below you and do not look at one who is above you. This would enable you not to be ungrateful for (appreciate better) the bounties that Allah has bestowed upon you."

The version of Bukhari is: When anyone of you looks at one who is superior in property (richer) and more handsome than him, he should also look at the one who is inferior to him.

(Bukhari kitaburriqaq bab yanzur ilaman huwa asfala minhu, Muslim kitabuzzuhad)

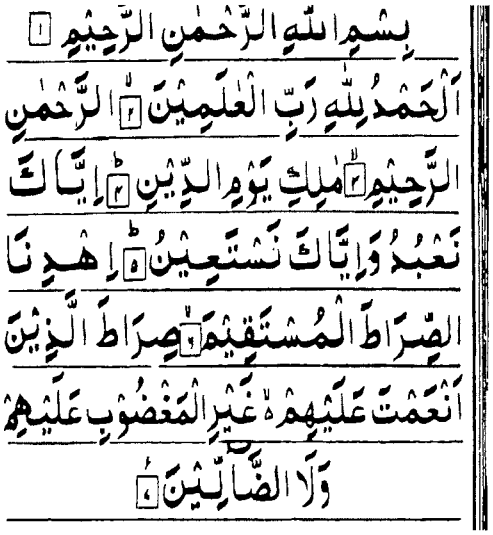
Hadhrat Jabir bin 'Abdullah[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "If someone is given a gift, he should give something in return. If he is unable to do so, he should praise the gift. If he has praised him, he has appreciated him, but if he hides it then he is ungrateful to the person (who has given him the gift)."

(Abu Dawud kitabul adab bab fi shakaral ma'ruf)

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

Terez Varkonyi, Philadelphia

Siratul Mustaqeem: A Journey


بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ ۝١
اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ رَبِّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ ۝٢ الرَّحْمٰنِ
الرَّحِيْمِ ۝٣ مٰلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّيْنِ ۝٤ اِيَّاكَ
نَعْبُدُ وَاِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِيْنُ ۝٥ اِهْدِنَا
الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ ۝٦ صِرَاطَ الَّذِيْنَ
اَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ ۙ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوْبِ عَلَيْهِمْ
وَلَا الضَّآلِّيْنَ ۝٧

Translation:

In the name of Allah, the Gracious, the Merciful.
All praise belongs to Allah alone, Lord of all the worlds,
The Gracious, the Merciful,
Master of the Day of Judgment.
Thee alone do we worship
And Thee alone do we implore for help.
Guide us in the straight path,
The path of those on whom
Thou hast bestowed Thy favors,
those who have not incurred Thy displeasure and those who have not gone astray.

As per the commandments of Allah and the *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] we, as Muslims, recite this surah numerous times in just one day. Countless books have been written on this beautiful surah and interpretations of each word are provided at great length and detail. One of the first books I picked up when studying Islam was the Promised Messiah's[as] *Commentary of the Holy Qur'an, Volume 1, Surah Fatiha.* I could probably spend this entire speech discussing the beauties within each verse, and why I fell in love with this surah, but I won't have enough time. So I will focus on one verse in particular. *Ihdina siralul mustaqeem.* Guide us in the straight path.

What is this path? And what does it look like? **It is a solitary path; the path less traveled. It is the path to God.** But if all strive to be on this path why does it have *fewer* travelers? Shouldn't it be overflowing with people, of all ages, races, and cultures? The Iranian poet Faridud Din Attar in *The Conference of the Birds* eloquently illustrates why it's not. He writes:

Of all the army that set out, how few
Survived the Way; of that great retinue
A handful lived until the voyage was done –
Of every thousand there remained but one...
Some deep within the ocean's depths were drowned;
Some died on mountain-tops; some died of heat...
Some died of thirst; some hunger sent insane...
Some became weak and could no longer fly...
Some paused bewildered and then turned aside
To gaze at marvels as if stupefied;
Some looked for pleasure's path and soon confessed
They saw no purpose in the pilgrims' quest...
In every hundred thousand one survived.
(*The Conference of the Birds, 4143-50).*

While an army of hundreds and thousands may start on this path, even with sincerest intentions, few survive. Rejoice if you have found this path, but hold strongly to it for there are challenges. So how do we get to the straight path and then how do we stay on it? The Promised Messiah[as] answers this question, he writes:

"[Siratul mustaqeem or the straight path] can never be attained if the ways that have been appointed to lead to the objective are abandoned. It is the eternal law that for every goal there is a fixed way and until one treads it one can never reach the objective. Therefore, the siratul mustaqeem (the straight path) is the means that must be sought through effort and exertion and ***prayer*** *and humility" (Commentary on the Holy Quran vol. 1 Surah Fatiha, p. 229).*

Here the Promised Messiah [as] tells us that first we pray to be guided in the right path, but that we must continue to pray, fervently and endlessly, so that we can remain on it in steadfastness.

"Remember God so much that you are forgotten. Let the caller and the called disappear; be lost in the Call" (Jalaluddin Rumi).

I want to tell you briefly the story of a girl who prayed for guidance and whose prayer was answered. Let me start from the beginning. She was born just a couple hours away from here to two hardworking immigrant parents. The atmosphere at home was always warm, supportive, comforting, and with faint aromas of paprika and café Santo Domingo. English was only spoken at school, while Spanish was for everywhere else. Like all good Catholic children, as her grandmother would say, she went once a week for religious studies. She completed her sacraments of Reconciliation, Holy Communion, and Confirmation, all without ever really conversing with God. It's not to say that she did not know her prayers or did not recite them, she did, but she felt that they were just words, words we say, because we have to, because we are told to, not because we believe in them. She and her family stopped going to Church after her Confirmation and with that stopped the prayers altogether. Yes, you probably guessed it – this is my story and background. So let's fast forward.

In my adolescence I attended a Quaker High School and during this time I experienced a new approach to prayer. Each week I had to participate in Meeting for Worship, which involved sitting silently in meditation. Quakers believe that in this state the Holy Spirit will touch your heart, enlighten you, and move you to speak about whatever you may be meditating on. Some would talk about world peace, current events, school, or anything they were inspired to share. In this silence, I started to talk to God.

In college, my academic pursuits pushed me into the world of Islam, in which I was forced to question and challenge my beliefs and my family's beliefs. I had learned about Ahmadiyyat from classmates and friends in college. My heart saw beyond the stereotypes and as I studied for my own intellectual growth, spiritually I started to blossom. I fell in love with various aspects of the religion. Ultimately, I was able to find God again through *Salat:*

> "So have patience. Surely the promise of Allah is true... And your Lord says: Pray unto Me; I will answer your prayer." (The Holy Qur'an 40:56 and 61)

As I think back to those high school days in Meeting for Worship I can't remember what I had said to God, however I've come to realize that sometimes the words don't matter but what is in the heart is important. My heart had been yearning for God for a long time, whether I was aware of it or not – He knew.

> *Hadhrat Anas[ra] relates that the Holy Prophet[saw] said: "Allah says: When a servant of Mine advances towards Me a foot, I advance towards him a yard and when he advances towards Me a yard, I advance towards him the length of his arms spread out. When he comes to Me walking, I come to him running." (Bukhari)*

When I started studying Islam and Ahmadiyyat, all barriers and prejudices were removed; only Allah can open hearts like that. And as I walked towards Him, He came running to me.

During this time of study my goal was always the same, to try to build a relationship with God. This is where prayer comes in. It was through *Salat* that I established communication with my Lord. Not only did I start to envision Him in *Sajdah* but I also learned *how* to pray through the teachings of the Holy Qur'an, the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] and the Promised Messiah[as]. This was all before ever becoming Muslim or Ahmadi. After about three years of study, during Ramadan of 2011, I felt very confused about the direction I was going to take in my life. I believed the Holy Qur'an was the word of God, I believed that Muhammad[saw] was His Messenger, and that the Promised Messiah[as] was the awaited messiah of all religions. But I was just 21 years old, alone, and frightened about the realities of conversion. So I submitted to Allah for guidance, for a sign, to give me the strength to follow the right path. I did i*stikhara.* For one week I prayed, and on the third night of *istikhara* I had a dream. *I was walking along the beach. I could see some of my Sunni Arab friends in the distance calling me over. Then I saw a man with a long grey beard wearing all white. At first glance he appeared homeless so I looked away, and continued walking towards my friends. But he kept walking towards me and when I was about to pass him I looked again. He radiated in light and I could not stop looking at him. I now saw that he had a white turban on his head. He put his hand out to me. And I woke up.*

In my first *mulaqaat* with Hazoor[aba], almost one year after this dream, I looked at Hazoor's face and hands, which were illuminated and full of light. His white turban

reminded me so much of the man's turban in my dream. This confirmed for me that I had chosen the right path. Through this dream I had found that personal connection with God I had been yearning for – prayed for – and the prophecy and purpose of the Promised Messiah's[as] coming had been fulfilled. As he says:

> *"The task for which God has appointed me is that I should remove the estrangement that has come between man and his Creator and replace it with a relationship of love and sincerity...I have also been raised so that I may demonstrate practically, and not just in words, how Divine powers enter man and are manifested through prayer and concentration."*

Ever since I was little, I knew there was a purpose to my existence. Now I know, my purpose is Ahmadiyyat, to be of the Promised Messiah's community, follower of the Holy Prophet[saw] and humble servant of God. I realized this when I was recently in Guatemala as a *waqf* working for the *Jama'at* and Humanity First. One night I had a pile of *Khubtas* and excerpts of the writings of the Promised Messiah[as] to translate into Spanish. Feeling a little overwhelmed, I stopped and prayed. After prayer, all I could do was picture the early Muslims going into battle behind our beloved Prophet[saw] facing armies with thousands of soldiers. The work I was doing no longer seemed overwhelming. Instead I started to feel grateful. Just look at how God has answered the prayers of the Promised Messiah[as] – this blessed community continues to grow and blossom. As God has answered the prayers of His most beloved, he has answered this humble servant's prayer for guidance.

So, the prayer *Ihdina siratul mustaqeem,* Guide us in the straight path has infinite blessings in it. It has guided me here AND it has taught me *how* to pray. It's easy to ask God for this or that thing, to get us into our favorite universities, to get into medical school, or a score of 180 on our LSAT. These prayers are fine; but Islam taught me, and teaches us, to submit to the will of God.

A couple weeks ago I was driving to Pittsburgh to visit my grandfather. Up in the mountains there tends to be a lot of fog. For those of you who have driven in fog you know that it can be scary. Your visibility is limited and you only see a couple feet ahead of you. Thankfully, I was with my father, and he had instructed me to keep my eye on the lines of the lane in case there were curves ahead. Immediately I focused on the lines, I was able to calm down, and drive through the fog unharmed. Our life is like driving in fog. We can barely see what is ahead of us, and what our future holds. The lines of the lane are our prayers, so that we are ready for unexpected turns along the way. The fog is our inability to see what is ahead as well as what is best for us. Only Allah knows. Which is why we must always ask for guidance, because there will be times of confusion and distractions ahead.

We must follow the example of God's most beloved, His prophets, in times of trouble. The Holy Qur'an, chapter 28, verses 21-25, narrates:

"And there came a man from the far side of the city running. He said, O Moses, of a truth, the chiefs are taking counsel together against thee to kill thee... So he went forth therefrom, fearful, watchful...and when he arrived at the water of Midian he found there a party of men, watering their flocks. And he found beside them two women keeping back their flocks...so he watered their flocks for them. Then he turned aside into the shade, and said, My Lord, I am in need of whatever good Thou mayest send down to me." (Holy Qur'an 28:21 – 25)

And God answered his prayer. Moses was blessed with a wife, employment, and protection, probably more than he could have asked for; Allah is Most Gracious and Ever-Merciful.

The Promised Messiah[as] writes that we must remain steadfast, meaning, holding on to *"a strong relationship with the Divine which a sword cannot cut asunder and fire cannot consume, nor can any other calamity damage it. The death of dear ones or separation from them should not interfere with it, nor should fear of dishonor affect it... Thus this door is very narrow and this path is very hard" (Philosophy of the Teachings of Islam p. 73).* And for our steadfastness, the Holy Qur'an encourages us:

"...these on whom are the blessings from their Lord and mercy, and it is these who are rightly guided." (The Holy Qur'an 2:157)

Todo pasa y todo queda,
pero lo nuestro es pasar,
pasar haciendo caminos,
caminos sobre el mar.
Caminante, son tus huellas
el camino y nada más;

caminante...se hace camino al andar.

These are a couple of lines to one of my favorite Spanish poems that translates as:

Everything goes and everything stays
But ours is to go,
Going by making paths
Paths over the sea.
Traveler, your footprints are
The path and nothing more;
Traveler, a path is made by walking.

I would say, dear travelers, a path is made by praying.

The Promised Messiah[as] says:

"O Ye, who consider yourselves among my followers, you will be counted as such in Heaven only if you will sincerely strive to walk on the path of righteousness. So offer your five daily salat with full attention and in awe of Allah Almighty as if you see Him."

(Kashti Nuh, p. 15).

Dear sisters, dear travelers, we must keep praying, fervently and endlessly, that we may be of the few who stay on the straight path and that our relationship with Allah becomes stronger each and every day. May Allah accept our prayers, *Ameen.*

****

PAY ZAKAT

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Our Beloved Country

Hamza Suhail, Dallas Jama'at

A beautiful land of treasured liberty,
Whose golden essence presents synergy,
An area where there is no existence of ascendance,
But only of equality and independence,

Impartiality remains in the air we breath,
Where no leader connives or tyrant schemes,
From dawn to dusk a nation of tranquility,
No opposing country presents this justice and glory,

Although America was formerly not its current form,
And the scars we left still shadow the gore,
The scars where many races remained enslaved,
But after centuries we acknowledged our intolerable mistakes,

In emancipation we now remain our current land of the free,
If our egos had not been released our nation would cease to embrace liberty,
We are crowned with no false wreath of patriots,
But those who defend our country, conveying a pleasing radiance,

This country has experienced the eminence of optimism but pessimism remains,
From revolution, to slavery, to unemployment and reduction of minimum wage,
Many of these flaws were egotistical which produced disgrace,
But America requires thriving, so these precedent flaws are essential to efface,

America as if a golden silk spun from undivided thread,
Cannot be weaker in any area for equality of firmness remains instead,
And is an aging thread that has experienced many tears,
But embraces its hue and always continues to repair,

This nation has been created as a gift to cherish and perfect,
And to put humanity first to construct an indestructible thread,
Even a reassuring fragment of a true smile that would please,
For we must protect the honor and grace of our beloved country, the land of the free

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WE HAVE HEARD A CRIER CALLING UNTO FAITH

Saliha Malik, Sadr Lajna Imaillah USA

In the name of Allah the Gracious the Merciful

رَبَّنَآ إِنَّنَا سَمِعْنَا مُنَادِيًا يُنَادِي لِلْإِيمَانِ
أَنْ آمِنُوا بِرَبِّكُمْ فَآمَنَّا رَبَّنَا فَاغْفِرْ لَنَا
ذُنُوبَنَا وَكَفِّرْ عَنَّا سَيِّئَاتِنَا وَتَوَفَّنَا مَعَ
الْأَبْرَارِ

"Our Lord, we have heard a Crier calling *us* unto faith, 'Believe ye in your Lord,' and we have believed. Our Lord, forgive us, therefore, our errors and remove from us our evils, and in death number us with the righteous. 3: 194

The Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] had said, that when you hear that the Promised Messiah[as] and Imam Mahdi has appeared, you should take whatever pain and suffering may be necessary and go, crawling on your knees over glaciers of ice if need be, and convey his *salams*, his greetings of peace, to him. (Khutba Khalifatul Masih V, 5/24/13)

In these profound words of the Holy Prophet[sa] he captured the enormous challenge and the inner conflict one faces upon hearing that the Promised Messenger has indeed come. I remember all too well when the person informing me about Islam and Ahmadiyyat said to me one day, "Hadhrat Jesus[as] did not actually die on the cross and the Promised Messiah[as] has come." I was shocked! At first I discounted it. I wondered if my friend was mentally unstable. I was uneasy and wondered what to do.

Having been raised Christian I had heard that the Messiah was to come. He was described as the Second Coming of Jesus, and the time for his coming would be a calamitous one, when:

...Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in various places. (The Holy Bible, Mathew 24:7)

I have been fascinated to observe in others also the same reluctance to accept the arrival of this Promised Messenger when I have given the good news to them of his arrival – even though they know well that according to their scriptures also the Messiah is long awaited and the current times are full of the promised signs. I have received many incredulous reactions, such as 'Why didn't I hear about this before?' and 'No, no you are misguided, the time is not right yet for the Messiah as the Muslim communities are all well". That last comment came from a very bright and obviously dedicated young Muslim woman at our presentation of Muhammad the Messenger of Peace at Boston University, just a few days before the young Muslim boys bombed the marathon runners a few blocks away.

What was it that made me turn and accept the Messiah? I realized that my friend was quite stable. And as I said I knew that the Messiah was to come. For me that knowing had been enriched because of my love for poetry. I was particularly fond of the haunting style of William Butler Yeats. Listen to this! This poem is called The Second Coming.

THE SECOND COMING

Turning and turning in the widening gyre

The falcon cannot hear the falconer;

Things fall apart; the center cannot hold;

Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,

The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere

The ceremony of innocence is drowned;

The best lack all conviction, while the worst

Are full of passionate intensity.

Surely some revelation is at hand;
Surely the Second Coming is at hand.

William Butler Yeats (1865 – 1939) wrote this poem in 1919 in the aftermath of the First World War. 'Nation will rise against Nation...' It pains me now to know that he wrote this with such longing for the coming of the Messiah just a few years after he had indeed come, and yet he never knew.

'The falcon cannot hear the falconer' – the servant cannot hear his master... 'Surely the Second Coming is at hand'

My dear sisters, it is purely by the Grace and Mercy of God alone that I and all of you have been enabled to accept the beloved Messenger of Allah, Muhammad Mustafa[saw] as well as the Promised *Imam* of the Latter Days, Hadhrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian[as], who was the Second Coming not only of Hadhrat Jesus[as], as I knew, but of all the Prophets of God. In his advent we witness the second coming of Hadhrat Adam[as] and of Noah[as]. Like Prophet Noah[as] he is to save us from the deluge – only the deluge today is the one of intense materialism, which has blinded us and made us deaf and dulled all our senses. In this Messiah we witness the second coming of Hadhrat Abraham[as], who like him, Allah promised protection from fire. He has been given the mantel of Krishna and of Buddha. In his coming there is the good news for the Sikh people as in him is the return of Guru Baba Nanak. And for the Muslims - it is the great good news of the fulfillment of the Second Coming of Muhammad[saw] foretold by him:

...the Holy Prophet[saw] said that the one who was to be raised in the latter days would be like unto his own coming into the world.

In other words, the person who was to come as the Promised Messiah[as] would be so totally immersed in his love of the Holy Prophet, that he would become, as it were, his reflection and thus he would attain the title of Prophet upon being sent into the world. (*Khutba* Khalifatul Masih V, 5/24/13)

The Promised Messiah[as] in powerful words has also forewarned us that his advent would be a time when earthquakes, natural disasters and violent eruptions would come one upon the other, more intensely than ever before.

'Habitations shall be demolished as if no one had ever lived in them.'

(*Haqiqatul Wahy,* p. 256).

Isn't that how they described the effect of the earthquakes in Haiti and the Tsunane in Japan? And here in USA we witnessed the same at the devastating hurricane in New Orleans and recently the twister in Oklahoma. He describes it as a time when materialism and worldly concerns will take such possession of people that they will lose their ability to recognize plain truths (refer to How to be Free of Sin).

'This will happen because mankind has stopped worshipping their true God and has become lost in the affairs of the world with all their heart and their effort and intent. ... With my coming the secret purposes of an affronted God which were hidden so far, became manifest....' (*Haqiqatul Wahy,* p. 257).

Therefore we know full well that the age in which we live is shouting and informing anyone who cares to listen that this is the time for the one who was to come, to have indeed made his appearance. (*Khutba* Khalifaul Masih 5/24/13)

What shall we do...? What shall we do with this treasure, this knowledge that the Messiah has come?

In the Holy Qur'an Allah says:

"O ye who believe! Respond to Allah, and the Messenger when he calls you that he may give you life, and know that Allah comes in between a man and his heart, and that He it is unto Whom you shall be gathered." (Holy Qur'an 8:25)

The Promised Messiah[as] says that pledge of *Bai'at* should instill a new life in an individual such that it transforms him or her completely. He should remain steadfast in face of any opposition. He must not feel that trials are difficult, but in fact he should consider them an opportunity to gain the pleasure of God. (*Khutba*: Achieving God Consciousness 6/29/2012)

My dear sisters we have to fill our selves and our lives with the energy of knowing that the Messiah[as] has come and stay true to our pledge in our daily actions. There is very little time.

'We have heard a Crier calling us unto faith.... and we have believed.' (from 3:194)

The purpose of the coming of the Messiah was to restore faith to the world. **Therefore in our sincere practice his purpose lives on**. The Promised Messiah[as] through his own example has brought to life for us the

true and beautiful character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa], so that we may love him and follow him. He has brought to life the peaceful and loving message of Islam. He has taught us to pray the true prayer, and instilled in us the ways of modesty and humility. In every way he has taught us to recognize God and come close to Him. We can only partake of these blessings by our own striving. May Allah help us and remove the obstacles in our way. May He enable us to be free of excuses, hypocrisy and cowardice. May we be those who truly hear and respond to the Crier's call.

Only recently Hazoor[aba] touched on the kind of determination we need in order to wholly and truthfully belong to the community of the Promised Messiah[as], who explained it in his own words:

The Promised Messiah[as] says, "It is difficult to instill honesty and sincerity without being prepared to undergo all manner of trouble in God's cause. God demands action and is pleased with action, whereas action can be painful. However, when man is prepared to endure pain for God, God does not put him through pain. To make one's heart free of any other but God and to fill one's heart with God's love and to follow God's will and be subservient to Him, just as a shadow is subservient to the real thing, in a way that there is no difference between God's will and what a person wants are all matters attained through prayer."

The Promised Messiah[as] says that the reality of Islam can be realized in a person when all his being is completely devoted to God with all his overt and covert strengths and whatever trusts he has been given by God are returned to Him. Not only in doctrinal terms but also in practice Islam's true picture is displayed, that is, a person who claims to be a Muslim proves that all his limbs and intellect and insight, all spiritual and physical strengths, his respect and property and everything else from his head to his toes, apparent or not, including his intentions and fears of his heart are as subservient to God as a person's limbs are under his control (*Khutba* Submit to Allah and seek His Protection 6/14/13).

The Promised Messiah[as] says, "Who is my companion? Who is dear to me? He who recognizes my station... He who is grafted onto me is grafted onto Him from whom I have come.... I hold a lamp in my hand. Any person who comes to me will certainly partake of the light of this lamp. But those who flee as a result of delusion and distrust will be thrown into darkness. I am the invincible citadel of this age. Only he who enters therein will be secure from the scourge of swindlers, crooks and ferocious beasts. But he who prefers to stay away from my periphery, will confront death from all directions!

Who is it who enters my citadel? Only he who discards all vice and instead embraces the path of rectitude. He who gives up the path of crookedness and treads along the path of truthfulness. He who cuts asunder from the bondage of Satan and becomes an obedient servant of God. Everyone who does that is of me and I am of him" (*The Victory of Islam*).

HADITH

Hadhrat Usamah bin Zaid[ra] relates that a daughter of the Holy Prophet[saw] sent word to him that my son has died (about to die) so please come to us. He sent his salutation to her with the message: "To Allah belongs that which He bestowed and to Him belongs that which He takes. Everything has its term fixed by Him. So, let her be steadfast, and hope for His Grace and Mercy. She sent the messenger back to him saying that for the sake of Alla-h he must come to her. He stood up and proceeded to her accompanied by Sa'd bin 'Ubadah, Mu'adh bin Jabal, Ubayy bin Ka'b, Zaid bin Thabit and others. The child was presented to him. He was in the throes of death and his[saw] eyes were filled with tears. Upon this Sa'd said: 'O Messenger[saw] of Allah! What is this?' He answered: 'This is compassion which Allah has placed in the hearts of His servants and Allah has compassion for such of His servants who are compassionate.' "

(Nasa'i kitabul jana'iz bab al-amr bilihtisab wassabr)

Hadhrat Usaid bin Abi Usaid[ra], a *tabi'i* (a narrator who has seen a Companion in his life time) relates that a woman from among those who took an oath of allegiance (at the hand of the Messenger[saw] of Allah) told him that the pledge taken by the Messenger[saw] of Allah contained the words: "That we will not disobey him[saw], we will not pinch our faces, we will not wail, nor tear our clothes, nor dishevel our hair during mourning."

(Abu Dawud kitabul jana'iz bab finnuh)

Book Review
By Zakaria Virk, Toronto

Name: "Hadrat Malik Saifur Rahman,"
Ex-Principal Ahmdiyya Seminary, Rabwah, Grand Mufti of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community
Author: Dr Karimullah Zirvi, New Jersey USA
Publisher: KZ Publications, 14-21 Saddle River Road, Fair Lawn, NJ 07410, USA
ISBN Number: 9781 882494 60 6
Date of Publication: June 2013
Pages: 434, easy to read large type, with colored photographs
Price: $10; Available from: karimzirvi@yahoo.com

This is a collection of articles that were published in a special issue of monthly *Khalid* Rabwah after the demise of Hadrat Malik Saifur Rahman in 1989. Dr Zirvi has translated these articles with much labour in a meticulous manner. Arabic, Persian and Urdu verses have been splendidly translated into English. Translation is so fluent that it does not appear to be a translated work. An autobiography by respected Malik Sahib is given on pages 341-359. Glossary of Arabic and Urdu words given is very useful.

The foreword to this book is by none other than Hadrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}. Hazoor states: "There is no doubt he was an outstanding learned man, had vast knowledge of the Qur'an, *Hadith* and many aspects of jurisprudence... one thing about him that always impressed me most was his extreme humility despite his distinct intellectual status".

I had seen respected Malik Sahib in Rabwah in my childhood as our backyard wall was common with his house in *Tehrike-Jadid* housing complex. I had seen him riding his bicycle to *Jamia* or offering *Salat* at Mahmud mosque. Even then my impression was that he was a revered but a reserved person, outwardly a man of few words, but in fact a sea of knowledge. He was tall, handsome, always wore impeccable white *shalwar-qameez* with black Jinnah cap.

I came to know of him at close range when in 1976 he was staying with his daughter Mrs. Bushra Bari. When Hadrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} visited Toronto in 1976 I was assigned the task of writing a welcome address in English. I wrote the address, gave it to Malik sahib who added more useful stuff and was read as official address of Canada *Jama'at.* Serenity, sagacity and sure mindedness exuded his countenance.

I was *Quaid Majlis Khuddam al-Ahmadiya* Toronto at the time. In the summer months we organized picnics in various parks of Toronto (Boyd's park on Hwy 7 and Islington Ave). I remember Malik Sahib not only graciously attended these picnics but assisted in the organizing these events. He attended all *Jama'at* monthly meetings held at YMCA, College Street, Toronto. I conducted interview of his wife in writing which was published in *Ahmadiyya Gazette* Canada as well as in monthly *Misbah Rabwah.* I have few photographs of Malik Sahib in which Hadrat Khalifatul Masih III^{rh} is leading Prayers in a park near Niagra Falls, and Hadrat Malik Sahib is standing next to me in the front row. One of these unforgettable photographs is included in the book. In 1975 his son Mujeeb Malik (now a NASA scientist) was doing his master of science at University of Toronto. Once I invited Mujeeb to my house in Mississauga. My wife cooked okra for him, he liked it so much that to this day whenever I meet Mujeeb I remind him of this incident and we relish both.

Hadrat Malik Sahib wore many hats, an administrator, an affable teacher, loving father, outstanding scholar, author, writer, and an independent minded *Mufti.*

Well-versed in Fiqh and Hadith

In the field of *Fiqh* (Jurisprudence) he was an outstanding scholar of the *Jama'at.* He had given numerous edicts in matters of jurisprudence which were published. Hadhrat Malik Sahib had a deep knowledge of Arabic grammar, his book *Qawaidus Sarf* (Arabic grammar) is an excellent example of this. He was well versed in *Fiqh.* His book *Hadiqatus Salihin* comprises of more than 1000 traditions.

Master of Scholastic Philosophy

During the last days of his illness in Calgary he wrote a lengthy research article in which he made a comparison of various Islamic schools of thought and sects.

Independent views in judicial matters

In explaining the issue of atonement for intentionally breaking fast is to feed 60 people, he wrote: "Real repentance is the true regret which originates from the bottom of the heart. If a person does not have the means to feed 60 people, he should have trust in the mercy of God, seeking forgiveness of God will be sufficient from him".

His personality

He was a symbol of affection, compassion, soft spoken, having soft disposition, great scholar and a very humble person. Hadrat Khalifatul Masih IV^{rh} stated:" God had granted him extraordinary knowledge, extraordinary sagacity... He was granted a beautiful balanced heart... he was an extremely fascinating person... great scholar and very affectionate towards his students". (page 106).

He was a good natured person, mixture of pleasantness and cheerfulness. He used to tell tasteful jokes, enjoyed listening to poems and *ghazals* (odes). By nature he was shy.

Respected Malik Sahib was not only a loving Principal but also a great man, top-notch scholar and a saintly person. (Hafiz Muzaffar Ahmad, page 161).

He loved hunting birds, once in Ahmadnagar (west of Rabwah) he shot down four white duck with one shot.

He was not like one who lacked a sense of humour. Rather he possessed a fine sense of humour. He enjoyed participating in telling jokes and also jovial gatherings. His jokes did not hurt anyone's feelings. He was a mixture gravity and seriousness. He was a nice man. (Maulana Nasim Saifi, page 186).

He was extremely fond of cleanliness and possessed an affable taste. His personality strengthened the manifestation of Divine Mercy. His liking for exquisiteness did not mean that he was accustomed to having expensive things. Rather his simplicity was free of all sort of formalities. (page 194).

As a father he was full of love. As far talking is concerned he was always a reserved person. He never bragged either in a gathering or at home. However he always carried a slight smile on his face and in his eyes there was always raging sea of love. (Son Hisham page 200).

Tenderness was dominant feature of his personality. However if there was a need to be tough he would act firmly. He always cared for the employees of the *Jamia.*

During his stay in Canada he used to watch ice hockey with great enthusiasm and knew many facts about the hockey teams. When Calgary team Flames defeated *Montreal Canadien* in 1988 and won the *Stanley Cup* he was watching the game in Virginia. He called me after the game and congratulated me (Abdul Bari Ahmadi, page 253)

He was unassuming. He was liberal in his thinking. He was not only liberal and broad minded but rather he was forward looking fifty or hundred years ahead of his time. (Maulana Naseem Mahdi, page 378).

He was tall, lean but had proportionate body, with prominent impressions of seriousness and dignity, cheerful, broadminded and magnanimous towards those who disagreed with him, pious, of resolute mind. (M.A. Saeed, page 395).

Respected Malik Sahib possessed a very simple disposition. He ate simple food and we never had to make any special effort to supply food to him. (Maulana M.I. Munir, page 315).

Scholar of Hadith

He was an authority on the commentary of Glorious Qur'an. In the field of *Ahadith,* he authored *Hadiqatus Salihin* in which the translation

of traditions of the Holy Prophet of Islam[saw] with description is given (p.107). All the scholars of the *Jama'at* used to get advice and guidance from him.

Teacher/ administrator

Fifty years of his life was spent in the field of education.

His method of teaching was outstanding. He would teach with great devotion. For instance in the classroom he would write a few examples, then explained these examples in such a clear manner that is impressed on the mind. He was not short-tempered and strict. He would be watchful of student morals and their health. Once he provided lecithin capsules to a student at his own expense.

Hadrat Malik Sahib served for eleven years as Principal of *Jamia Ahmadiyya.* Every student felt he was the sole recipient of his beneficences, therefore students felt comfortable and at ease to talk to him. He would not scold any student in the presence of other people, always keeping in mind student's self-respect.

He used to give lectures orally without notes. Often he used to dictate to students certain things. During the lectures he used to discuss moral training and certain other subjects. He had a passion for poetry, knew thousands of Persian verses by heart. (page 193).

He was such a teacher who did not just teach the subject matter, but rather like an affectionate father also desired good for each student. He used to be very happy to see good progress of this students. (page 239).

He was a teacher and a loving father. His advice was always gracious and his admonitions were always fatherly. Knowledge, forbearance, friendship, dignity, generosity, moral training cheerful disposition are some of the jewels studded with precious stones with which his personality was adorned. (Raja Nasrullah Khan Sahib, page 318).

He was instrumental in the establishment of Research Cell at *Jamia Ahmadiyya*. He was also founding member of the *Majlis Khuddam al-Ahmadiya*, Qadian.

Family man

He was blessed with seven children, four daughters and three sons. By the grace of God all are sincere and devoted Ahmadis. He was never negligent of his family members. He would take care of each child's needs. If someone was sick he would give them medicine and his or her food. If someone had a headache he would press his or her head. (daughter Amatul Hameed, page 169). He never imposed restrictions on wearing clothes; however, he disliked nonsense fashions. He treated the children with great love. He respected his in-laws.

His daughter Amatul Latif Zirvi writes: "My dear father was a very affectionate and loving father. He used to become restless upon seeing any of us suffer even slightly. He would pray and use all means to alleviate our pain and suffering. He always gave preference to his children's comfort over his own comfort. The sweet memories of my dear father are swirling like a film in my mind." (p. 225).

Husband

His wife Mrs. Amatur Rashid Shaukat Sahiba stated: Respected Malik sahib was by nature a compassionate, candid and affectionate person. He desired good for everyone. I can never repay his love and kindness. (page 160).

Author / writer

Besides writing more than 12 books, he authored scores of scholarly articles which were published in *Jama'at* newspapers and journals. However are many articles which have not been published yet.

His article on Prohibition of interest in Islam was published in several instalments in daily *Nawai Waqt,* Lahore. The editor Hamid Nizami requested Malik Sahib to contribute more articles for his paper.

During his stay in Calgary, he would go to University of Calgary library and study Arabic books for hours. He used to say that he wished he had the opportunity to benefit from such libraries when he was young. (Abdul Bari Ahmadi, page 249).

Mufti Ahmadiyya community

In 1947 Hadrat Khalifatul Masih II[ra] appointed Hadrat Malik Sahib Mufti of Ahmadiyya community. Malik sahib had great passion for knowledge. He held the important office for 42 years and proved his sterling qualities as an all-round jurist. During his tenure he issued 5500 religious edicts. He did not accept opinions of previous scholars blindly rather he used his own spiritual wisdom and independent thinking.

He was madly in love with Hadrat Khalifatul Masih IV[rh]. When

one mentioned Hazoor's name, his eyes would well up with tears.

He explained with great comfort many complex juristic problems. For instance he wrote an article about the inheritance of an orphan grandson.

"He did not have slightest element of narrow-mindedness and blind acceptance. He comes across to us as an intelligent, broadminded and independent minded Mufti". (Maulana M.A. Jalil, page 183).

Dr Zirvi must be commended for this valuable addition to the biographies of Ahmadiyya scholars. Young and not so young will benefit immensely from the life of this worthy scholar. Whereas his memory is alive in the hearts of so many of his students, but this book will be a source of guidance for coming generations.

(zakaria.virk@gmail.com)

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HADITH

Hadhrat Jabir[ra] relates that my aunt was given three divorces. Under these circumstances, she went out to pluck dates for her livelihood, a man met her and told her not to leave the house (during her waiting period). She went to the Holy Prophet[saw] and told him about the incident. He[sa] said, "Go and pluck the dates. It is just possible that you may give some of these as charity or spend them on good deeds."

(Abu- Da-wu-d kita-but±t±ala-q ba-b fil mabtu-tah tukhrija binnaha-r)

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Jalsa Salana 2013 Exhibition Report

Fazal Ahmed
In Charge of Exhibitions
Historian, Ahmadiyya Jama'at, USA

By the grace of Allah, the National Exhibition of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was beautifully displayed on the blessed occasion of the *Jalsa Salana* USA 2013 Farm Expo in Harrisburg. The exhibition was on the lines of the series of sermons of our beloved Hazoor, Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V[aba] regarding the Qura'nic teaching of *'Kunu ma'as sadeqeen'* i.e. keep the company of the truthful, the teaching expounded in verse 119 of *Sura Al-Taubah.*

Properly titled photographs of over 150 Companions of the Promised Messiah[as] were displayed. The display provided an added ambience of spirituality to the *Jalsa.* The younger generations of Ahmadis had an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the great companions who served at the feet of their Master, the Promised Messiah[as] , day and night. Many older members were delighted to see and to trace their ancestry to the great *Suhaba.* The VIPs and guests saw the spiritually graceful countenances of the companions who flocked to the *Imam* of the Age[as] at a time of great challenges and hardships. The remarks of profuse gratitude to see the pictures of the Promised Messiah[as] the *Khulafa-e-Ahmadiyyat, Shuhatada-e-Ahmadiyyat* were expressed by all visitors to the Exhibition Gallery. Other themes, historical as well as traditional in nature such as, the history of Islam, Ahmadiyyat in America, Missionaries, Messages, Services to mankind, Persecution, our Mosques and our literature were presented with dates, places, description and captions. TV projections played high definition videos on *Khulafa-e-Ahmadiyyat* and related topics.

There were hundreds of exhibits decoratively arranged in the Exhibition Gallery which was also the walkthrough. So, every guest of the Promised Messiah[as] viewed the Exhibition. At the beginning of each section signs were posted to inform the visitor of what was coming up next as they walked through.

Trained tour guides briefed the visitors on the themes. The exhibition was quite well received, by the grace of Allah Almighty. *Alhamudullilah Rabbil Alameen.*

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ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE NATIONAL SECRETARY PUBLICATIONS

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If you print a flyer, book or any other item locally, please send a copy to Secretary Publications so that it can be added to the Ahmadiyya archives and it can also be included in the annual publications report sent to the International Headquarters.

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If you are a member of the Ahmadiyya Community in the US, you should be receiving Ahmadiyya Gazette/al-Nur and al-Hilal regularly. If you are not receiving these periodical, please contact the president of your Jama'at to make sure that your address is current in the *Jama'at* records.

English magazines Review of Religions and Muslim Sunrise can be subscribed. Urdu newspapers Al-Fazl International, Al-Fazl Rabwah, Badr Qadian, Misbah, Khalid and Tashheezul-Azhan can also be subscribed.

Review of Religions: Send $30 with your mailing address to Review of Religions, 188-15 McLaughlin Ave, Hollis NY 11423. Phone 718 479 3345. Email: usa@reviewofreligions.org.

Muslim Sunrise: Go to muslimsunrise.com to subscribe using your credit card or print subscription form from the site and mail it with $15 to Subscriptions Muslim Sunrise, 15000 Good Hope Road, Silver Spring, MD 20905

Please arrange your local *Jama'at* libraries

All presidents, please appoint a librarian and ask the librarian to do the following.

1) Divide the items in the library in three categories.
   a) Separate the items which you want to stay in the library and do not want to be borrowed to take outside the library. These are reference items. These are books which are difficult to replace in case they are misplaced.
   b) Separate the items which can be borrowed to be taken outside the library. These are the circulation items. These are books which can be replaced if misplaced or lost.
   c) Separate the items which can be taken away by the patrons. These are free items.
2) Put the reference and circulations items under lock and key.
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5) Please send the National Secretary Publications a copy of the catalogue so that the national office can know the location of all the titles in possession of the US *Jama'ats*. This way, in case a researcher needs to consult a particular item, we can identify the location of the item

Syed Sajid Ahmad, National Secretary Publications,
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Twinkle Twinkle Little Star!

Rashid Arshed
Secretary Isha'at

After I finished my *Maghrib* Prayer I proceeded toward the dining area for *Aftari* dinner. At the main entrance of the mosque, at the steps, I met three children who rushed to me. Each had plastic plates in their hands. Each competed to give the plate to me before the other did. I tried to get the plate from the youngest of them all who is 4 or may be three and half. This happened every evening since the beginning of *Ramadhan.* Then there is another very young child with an apron, always standing next to his father helping him serve the dinner to the members of the community. There is a peculiar joy and pride on this child's face and on every child's face that I see helping others.

The *Khuddam* who are in their 20s' 30's and 40's now but, who, not long ago, were children themselves are there too. Most of them were born in America. They are serving the *Jama'at* in Key positions; they are fluent in English as well Urdu and well versed in Qur'an, *Hadith* and the *Jama'at* literature. By the Grace of Allah they are also leaders in their professions. What is common between these grownups and the children mentioned above? Their parents taught them and inspired them with love from the early age to do well and excel others in good.

Those little children who run around with enthusiasm to serve us, will, one day, *Insha'Allah* be in the leadership position to serve the *Jama'at* and the world at large. May Allah bless their efforts and guide us all to take steps in the right direction, the *Sirat-e Mustaqeem.*

International Association of Ahmadi Architects and Engineers, USA Chapter

Hazoor Anwer[aba] kindly has approved the following appointments:

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May Allah Bless these appointment and they may serve the Jama'at to best of their abilities, *Ameen.*

Dr. Zaheer A. Bajwa

General Secretary

PREACHING TO A NON-AHMADI AND HIS *MULLAH*

Mirza Mahmood Ahmad Sec. Tabligh, Columbus, OH

I invited a non-Ahmadi *Mullah* to show him our mosque. I visited his mosque sometimes ago. The reason to invite him was that he believes that لا الٰہ الا اللہ محمد رسول اللہ is not our Kalima. He was telling about this to one of his followers in my presence, but his follower was telling the *Mullah*, "No their *Kalima* is the same". He said this, because I made him listen the *Khutba* of Hadhrat *Ameerul Momineen*, and he watched the *Adhan* as well as Hazoor reciting the *Kalima* and the writings of *Kalima* on the *Mehrab* of the Mosque. But the *Mullah* declined to go to see our mosque, saying that he was busy at that time. I had been preaching to this non-Ahmadi Muslim friend who was given Noah's Ark sometime ago and was asking many questions after reading the book. I met him twice and discussed with him about the death or life of Hadhrat Jesus[as], about *the Khatam un Nabeyyeen,* the truthfulness of the Promised Messiah[as] and other topics about Ahmadiyyat. The fulfillment of the prophecy of the invention of the trains and other means of transportation in the time of the Promised Messiah was also discussed. A total of 2-1/2 hours were spent while preaching him. Unfortunately when he did not have any answers of the arguments he disappeared and did not come for any further discussion.

Interfaith Prayer Breakfast Meetings

This humble servant of Islam Ahmadiyyat had the opportunity to attend the meeting in the City of Worthington many times during this period in a group of interfaith of different denominations of Christians and Jews etc. This group was reading the book of Romans in these days.

This is worth mentioning that regularly attending this group and explaining the Islamic point of view on different topics has changed the views of all the members of the group.

- In the meeting the second chapter of the Romans was read. After reading different members commented on different verses. Some people's comments were very interesting and against St. Paul. I had the opportunity to tell them the Islamic point of view. I told them that Jesus[as] was circumcised. He came to fulfill the law and not to abolish it. Nothing is mentioned about the atonement in his teachings. He did not go to the cross on his own to take the sins of any or all human beings. St. Paul, who was an enemy in all the life of Jesus[as], jumped in all of a sudden and changed all these things, which does not make any sense. It is very strange that no one defended St. Paul and kept quiet on this issue. I thought that this is the time that now I should give them the 'Fountain of Christianity' a booklet of the Promised Messiah[as]. So an order was placed to get some copies of the booklet.
- A very good Baptist Christian friend of this group told me that he has written a letter to his Pastor, explaining to him that he is no more a member of his church.
- Another Catholic friend of this group, who is a funeral director, told me that he mentioned some words which I wrote in an email to all the members of this group at the death of a person of this group. (These words were the translation of انا للہ و انا الیہ راجعون i.e., "Surely, to Allah we belong and to Him shall we return." I told him that these words are the translation of a verse of the Holy Qur'an and an advice to all the believers to say at the time of any loss. He was pleased so much that I cannot explain in my own words.
- He also mentioned that all the important emails which I send to the group he reads them and there was great knowledge in them.
- In one of the meetings the atonement of the human being was discussed. All 10 Christians could not break the arguments of the Holy Qur'an.
- n another meeting Islam's teaching about the spread of Islam by force was questioned. We gave them the example of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw], that he

did not use any force to spread Islam, rather he was commanded by God in the Holy Qur'an to convey the message and his work is not to act as police.

- In one meeting we told them that we believe in all the prophets of Allah sent by Him in all parts of the world. We do not discriminate in any one of them including Jesus[as] We gave 6 copies f the Fountain of Christianity to the members of the group.

An Ahmadi Family Invited Some Guests

An Ahmadi family invited 7 guests in their home where I was also invited. Apart from other things a very good question was asked about the continuation of the revelation of Allah till this day and age. They were told that by the grace of Allah only the Ahmadiyya Muslim community not only believes in that, but also the founder of the community had received hundreds of the revelations as prophecies which were fulfilled in his life time. We gave them many examples of Urdu, Arabic and English languages which are still fulfilling after his demise.

Free Masons were preached: A Christian pastor invited me for a presentation about the introduction of our community to a group of 'Free Masons' in their building "Aladdin Shrines". In the 10 minute presentation I told the group of 50 people, brief history of the *Jama'at* and what our *Jama'at* is doing in the USA and in the whole world to serve the humanity. We distributed the pamphlets to them thereafter.

We gave a copy of the Holy Qur'an and the life of the Holy Prophet[saw] to a Nigerian lady who became interested to know about our community and gave her contact number to the *Lajna* president.

Two more people were given basic introduction about our community and a copy of 'I love Muhammad[saw], a sermon of Hazoor.

The Muslim Times

I sent 18 email addresses to the editor of the Muslim Times to send them on daily basis.

Jalsa Guests:

Sohaib Awan and myself went to our National *Jalsa Salana* with one non-Muslim and one non-Ahmadi Muslim guests respectively. The guests enjoyed very much by the grace of Allah. Sohaib is also preaching to some of his non Ahmadi Arab class fellows on his university campus.

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HUMANITY FIRST NEEDS VOLUNTEERS AND MONETARY DONATIONS

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HADITH

Hadhrat Jabir[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "There is a cure for every disease. Thus, when proper treatment for the disease is found, the patient is cured by the command of Allah the Most Honored and Glorious."

(Muslim kitabussalam bab likulli da'dawa')

Hadhrat 'Alqamah bin Va'il[ra] relates that his father told him that Hadhrat Suwaid bin Tariq[ra], in his presence, asked the Holy Prophet[saw] about alcohol. The Holy Prophet[saw] forbade the use of it. He[ra] said: "But we drink it as medicine. The Messenger[saw] of Allah said: 'It is not a medicine but it is a disease.'"

(Tirmidhi abwabuttib bab karahiyataddawa' bil maskar)

Hadhrat Abu Hurairah[ra] relates that the Messenger[saw] of Allah said: "None of you should wish for death, for if he is virtuous it is possible that he might add to his good works, and if he is an evil doer he might be able to remedy his past ."

(Nasa'i kitabul jana'iz bab tamanniyal maut)

Hadhrat Bra' bin 'Azib[ra] relates: "The Holy Prophet[saw] enjoined upon us the following seven (things): To visit the sick, to follow a funeral procession, to say to a sneezer, 'May Alla -h be merciful to you' if he says, 'Praise be to Allah', to help others fulfill their oaths, to help the oppressed, to accept invitations, and to multiply the greeting of peace."

(Bukhari kitabul adab bab tashmitil 'atisi idha hamidallah)

NEW YORK JAMA'AT PARTICIPATES IN 2013 HARLEM BOOK FAIR

Shoeb Abulkalam

New York *Jama'at* participated in the 2013 Harlem Book Fair, where over 100 stalls were present this year. It was a sunny day on July 20th, Saturday, where stalls were zoned between Malcolm X Blvd and Lenox on west 135th street. Many *Khuddam* and *Ansar* participated in the hot day under the sun distributing fliers and selling books. Members who joined and helped out were Tahir Khan, Al Hasan Atta Sahib, Aslam Ali sahib, Abdul Ghafoor Sahib, and Shoeb Abulkalam. Salam Bhatti joined us from Long Island where he engaged in answering questions to people on various topics in Islam. Absar Ahmed from Brooklyn also helped us sell books, and distributing fliers. Asad Bajwa also dropped by and brought Hasan Hakeem sahib, National *Tabligh* Secretary USA along with Ali Murtuza Sahib and couple of members from Pittsburgh also attended in this book fair including Omar Shahid Sahib, who is the president of the Pittsburgh *Jama'at*. *Khuddam* and *Ansar* were fasting the whole day and it was truly a challenge for us all and *Alhamdulillah* we stayed through the whole day meeting hundreds of people and spreading the message of Ahmadiyyat.

Our *Jama'at* President Nazir Ayaz Sahib is specially to be thanked for his effort to make all the necessary arrangements for this Book festival. Our stall had display of beautiful posters, and our finest *Jama'at* books along with free give away (pens, tape measures, calendar magnets, key chains, calculators with all our *Jama'at* logo and contact info) mainly the Review of Religion books, Holy Qur'an DVDs, business cards, and book catalogs. We were answering questions to public those interested in Islam and Jesus Christ, and Holy Prophet[saw]. There was a large crowd thousands of visitors and also a large number of Muslims were present there. Over 500 Review of Religions were handed out, over 200 pamphlets on Islam were distributed. Main books sold were Jesus in India, Life of Muhammad[saw], Christianity a journey from facts to fiction, Islam's response to contemporary Issues, and Holy Qur'an in Arabic, English, and French. We also displayed beautiful long posters all around our bookstall on the African American Ahmadis in USA and their contributions. Aslam Bha helped us in transporting the books and ourselves in his van

NY Jama'at Donates Books to Bookstore

Abdul Ghafoor Sahib, Secretary *Tabligh,* and Shoeb Abulkalam, Secretary Publications donated 17 *Jama'at* Books to Housing Works. The books donated were Life of Muhammad[saw], True concept of Jihad, Absolute Justice, Women in Islam, Muhammad[saw] in the Bible, An interpretation of Islam, Our teaching, Why Islam, The Muslim Sunrise, Islam and Human Rights, An elementary Study of Islam, Jesus in India, Islam Moderation of Man, A Message of Peace, Islam's response to contemporary issues, Deliverance from the cross, and The philosophy of the teachings of Islam.

Housing Works is a healing community of people living with and affected by HIV/ AIDS. Their mission is to end the dual crises of homelessness and AIDS through relentless advocacy, the provision of lifesaving services. There is a café/bookstore in Soho where people goes to read and buy books and we have donated our books there so people can benefit from. *Insha Allah* more books will be donated in future.

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HADITH

Hadhrat Anas[ra] relates that when the Holy Prophet[saw] finished eating he would lick his three fingers and say: "If while eating a mouthful of food falls from any one of you, he should wipe away the dirt and eat it and should not leave it for Satan. He[saw] enjoined us to wipe out the dish properly and said: 'You do not know in which part of your food is the blessing.' "

(Tirmidhi abwabul atimah bab

"MUSLIMS FOR LOYALTY" CELEBRATION

Khadija Israfil Ahmad, Dayton Jama'at

"And they planned and Allah planned, and Allah is the Best of Planners." Holy Qur'an, 8:31

The Dayton *Jama'at* participated in the Fourth of July celebration held in Kettering, OH. Kettering is one of a number of small cities and townships that surround the City of Dayton. The City of Dayton's celebration was held during the time of our *Jalsa Salana* USA.

During the month of June, we held special meetings, including teleconferences, in order to plan for the celebration. As a result of these meetings, we created two "stations," one for the sisters and the children and one for the brothers. Excellent Ahmadiyyat informational posters and an abundance of pamphlets and literature along with copies of the Holy Qur'an were available at each station. Qur'an was distributed. Of course, each station was adequately manned in order to greet and interact with everyone who visited. .

Prior to July 4th, it had rained every day for more than a week. So it was no surprise when we were greeted by rain on 4th July. Bach station was within a tent which provided some protection from the rain. Early in the day, there were very few people walking around the area. lt almost seemed like there might not really be a celebration. However, after a while, the rain began to subside.

The displays at the men's station began to attract visitors, and the brothers were able to engage them in conversations which included an explanation of our July 4th theme. Our theme is based on the Holy Qur'an, the sayings of the Holy Prophet[saw], and the writings of the Promised Messiah[as].

The Holy Qur'an: "O ye who believe, obey Allah and obey the Prophet and obey those in authority from among you (4:60)."

The Holy Prophet[saw] says: "Whoso obeys the ruler obeys me, and whoso disobeys the ruler disobeys me" (Muslim)."

"Listen to and obey your ruler, even if you [despise him] (*Bukhari*)."

"Love of one's country is a part of faith (Sakhavi; Safinat al-Bihar, vol. 8, p.525; *Mizan al-Hikmah, Hadith* #21928)."

The Promised Messiah[as]: says, "Obedience to governmental authority is one of [Islam's] imperatives" (Works and Speeches, Vol 1, p. 26). "To entertain ui-will against a government under whom life is lived in freedom and there is complete security and religious obligations can be discharged to the full is a criminal step and not Jihad ... Thus God Almighty had established me on the principle that sincere obedience and gratitude should be rendered to a benign government such as the British Government. My Community and I are bound by this principle" (*Tolfah Qaisariyya*, pp. 9-10).

"lt should be the duty of every Muslim to render true and sincere obedience and offer heartfelt gratitude to such an authority and pray for their welfare." Visitors included the Kettering city Mayor and his wife as well as two of the city council members. Irshad A. Malhi *Sahib*, *Imam* East Midwest Region USA, was interviewed by the local ABC television station, Channel 22. The interview was aired on the July 4" 6:00 p.m. news. At about the same time, adults with children were beginning to approach the women's table. The children were attracted to the activities provided for them at the table. The parents, of course, followed the children. During one of our June meetings, we had decided not to offer balloons to the children because discarded balloons are hazardous to wildlife. Instead, for the young children, there were toys, stuffed animals, baseball helmets, and face painting. We were all amazed by the fact that *Atfal* Raghib Shahid is able to make origami figures. The origami (the art of Japanese paper folding) and the face painting, by one of the *Lajna* members, were favorites of the children. *Lajna* members provided him a painting for the women and girls. This was so popular that three sisters were kept busy well into the evening. While the children were involved in their activities, *Lajna* members assembled packets of literature and presented them to the parents and other adult visitors. Miniature US flags and ball point pens were distributed also.

A number of non-Ahmadi Muslims visited the stations. Some of these Muslims remained in the area of the women's station after accepting literature and the Holy Qur'ans. Even the rain seemed to help us succeed. *Ameen.*

INTERFAITH SYMPOSIUM HIGHLIGHTS

Touba Khurshid, Minnesota Chapter

The Minnesota Interfaith Open Forum (MIOF) MIOF is a collaborative platform between various faith traditions in which the Ahmadiyya Community represents the Islamic perspective. MIOF holds three regular symposiums per year. The first interfaith symposium of the year was held on June 2nd, 2013 at Hennepin county Library Auditorium hosted by Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. The chosen topic of this symposium was 'Concept Of God In My Faith Tradition'. Speakers from different religious backgrounds of Christian (Pastor Morry) , Hinduism (Dr Shashi Sane), Buddhism (Roshi) & Islam (Inam-ul-Kausar) gave a summarized perspective about the topic from their religious point of view.

Dr. Shashi Sane presenting the Hindu perspective on the 'Concept of God in My Faith Tradition' gave the first synopsis in the symposium on the chosen topic. He introduced the topic by saying that God is permeable and his eternal energy permeates through the cosmos however humans only experience some of this eternal energy. In addition, God possesses numerous qualities such as eternal love, compassion, mercy etc. He associated the divinity of God to human beings because according to Hinduism, divinity can be found in every human and this divinity is portrayed depending on the relationship a human is engaged in. For example, father to son, doctor to patient and teacher to student. According to Hinduism, God's ultimate intelligence created this world, hence the entire creation is divine. He added that difference in languages; different temples were not a barrier to the recognition of the divinity of God as India is a country that possesses many different temples in different speaking regions. He also added that the sacred *murtis* (typically refer to images that express Divine Spirits) in the temple possess different features and stand for unique attributes even though they all belong to one God, expressing his divinity. Finally, he added that the similarity between Hinduism and Buddhism is that in both faith traditions, one can personally experience God through deep meditation

The Buddhist perspective on the chosen topic was presented by Roshi Steve Hagen. He began his presentation by stating that the best worship of God is to have no idea about God. In Buddhism, there is no concept of God. He mentioned that Buddhism is not to be confused with Atheism. The religion of Buddhism is not interested in thinking or seeking to find out if God or any other supernatural reality exists. Buddhists believe that there is a difference between belief and faith. Buddhism is not a belief system; therefore humans study nature in order to attain personal wisdom. He elaborated that the concept of divinity in Buddhism may be attributed to 'waking up to the truth' by our own human minds. Human mind is enough and self-sufficient in seeking any truth and perceiving reality as the teaching and way of life of Buddha-dharma lead to enlightenment while rejecting the existence of a creator deity.

Pastor Rahcel Morey presented the Christian perspective on the chosen topic. In Christianity, God is an eternal being. She mentioned that God possess the quality and ability of being transcended and immanent (involved in this world). She related this phenomenon to the relationship between Jesus and the concept of the divine God. She stated that there are various metaphors to express the divinity of God. Elaborating on this point, she also mentioned that God is also portrayed in other ways such as through songs, biblical literature, myths, Holy Scriptures but the ultimate way to perceive God is, 'God in the form of Jesus'. The concept of trinity is used to express a mysterious God in Christianity. Christians understand God in the specific form of Jesus who was both fully human and God. According to Christianity, the best way to explain the concept of God is ' Jesus as God in the flesh'. She mentioned that humans no longer have to fear death because death of Jesus took away all human sins. In addition she added that, humans can never go through what Jesus experienced as he had to bear all sorts of pain and atrocities. Therefore to understand the concept of God in Christianity, following the way of Jesus is the ultimate divine way.

Finally, the Islamic perspective on the topic was presented by *Imam* Kausar who recited verses from *Surah*

Ikhlas in the Holy Qur'an relating to the concept of Unity of God in Islam. He particularly emphasized belief of One God in Islam. He stated that the relationship between God and humans can be established when humans seek to find the Supreme Being. This can be accomplished by adopting ways that take us to the Supreme Being. The Holy Qur'an answers all questions that humans can think of, with respect to all topics and gives proof about all possible matters, which includes the existence of God. "The best names" are His, each of which evokes a distinct attribute of God. God is the beginner and the end of everything. God possesses countless bounties and there is no image of him, He is beyond perfection. God is eternal, Everlasting and Self-sustaining. Muslims believe all that is on earth will pass away except God, Who is Ever Living. God speaks, listens, hears, and talks since the beginning of the time to those people who make a real effort to develop a bond with their Creator. Dreams, visions and revelations are all forms that prove that God still exists and communicates to His loved ones. He is the most precious treasure, perfect in all His attributes and is free from any defect. A human is nothing without him. God has provided things that are beyond human minds for which humans did not possess any knowledge. *Imam* Kauser concluded by stating that that there is nothing more manifest than God.

The symposium concluded with a lively question and answer session. Following the Q&A session, refreshments were served giving the opportunity for people to interact and also pose more individual questions to the speakers. A total of 55 including 35 Non-Muslim friends attended the event.

THE HOLY PROPHET[saw]

Marriage with Hadhrat Khadijah[ra]

The Holy Prophet, Muhammad[saw], grew into manhood exhibiting such sterling qualities of truthfulness, integrity, and piety that he became known throughout the land as the Truthful and the Trustworthy (*Al-Sadiq* and *Al-Amin*). On hearing of Muhammad's[saw] fame, a rich lady by the name of Khadijah[ra], who was twice widowed, invited him to her house and requested him to take charge of her business. Muhammad[saw] travelled to Syria while in charge of Hadhrat Khadijah's[ra] business. The expedition met with great success. Hadhrat Khadijah[ra], the daughter of Khuwailid bin Asad bin 'Abdul 'Uzza bin Qusayy, was an intelligent and noble woman. She made a proposal of marriage to Muhammad[sa] which was accepted. At the time of his marriage, Muhammad[saw] was twenty-five years old while Hadhrat Khadijah[ra] was forty. They had six children - two boys and four girls. Both sons, Qasim and 'Abdullah had passed away before his prophethood but the daughters, Zainab[ra], Ruqayyah[ra], Ummi Kulthum[ra] and Fatimah[ra] lived into Islam and embraced it.

(Sirah Ibne Hisham, Biography of the Prophet[saw], Abridged by 'Abdus Salam Harun, pp. 37-38, Al-Falah Foundation, Cairo, Egypt)

Rebuilding of the Sacred House of Allah (*Ka'bah*)

The *Ka'bah* had been damaged due to heavy rains and floods. It needed urgent repair. Four tribes of the *Quraish* divided the repair work among themselves. The walls were raised to the point where *Hajr-e-Aswad* was to be placed. The black stone was regarded as very sacred by the Meccans. Thus, it was considered a matter of pride and honor for a tribe to place the *Haajr-e-Aswad* in the *Ka'bah*. Therefore, the right to place the *Hajr-e-Aswad* in the *Ka'bah* became a bone of contention among the tribes who were involved in the reconstruction of the *Ka'bah*. To defuse the conflict and to avoid bloodshed, Abu Umayyah proposed that the first man who entered the gate of the *Ka'bah* the next morning suggest a solution to the dispute among the tribes. The next day, the first person to enter the gate of the *Ka'bah* was Muhammad[saw]. Everyone was pleased to know that and shouted, "He is Muhammad, he is *Al-Amin* (the trustworthy)." So they asked Muhammad[saw] to decide the matter. Muhammad[saw] said, "Give me a cloak." He spread the cloak on the ground and placed the *Hajr-e-Aswad* at the center of the cloak and said, "Let the elders of each clan hold on to one corner of the cloak and raise the cloak to the level where *Hajr-e-Aswad* is to be placed." When this was done, Muhammad[saw] picked up the stone and placed it in its place in the wall of the *Ka'bah*. In this way, he defused a serious disagreement among the tribes and a bloody civil war was avoided.

MUSLIMS FOR LOYALTY CELEBRATION

by Abdul Ghafoor, Tabligh Secretary, New York Jama'at

A successful Fourth of July 2013 event celebrated at Baituz Zafar, Queens attracted 250 people, including 85 guests from the surrounding community. The event was very successful. At 10 AM members of the *Jama'at* started setting up for the day. The Mosque was decorated with banners, flowers and balloons. For the event, the *Jama'at* built a 10' x 12' platform made of brick and granite in the front of the Mosque, which will be a permanent fixture. Also, two flagpoles, stretching into the sky, bearing flags for both *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya and the United States, are now in place. The program started at 1:15 PM, with the Flag Hoisting Ceremony. *Imam* Daud Hanif Sahib had the honor of raising the flag of *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya, and New York State Senator Tony Avella raised the flag of The United States. This was followed by a harmonious singing of the National Anthem by three girls.

The first speaker was New York State Senator Tony Avella, who spoke of his happiness that the *Jama'at* was celebrating with the community and others to recognize the independence of The United States. He also mentioned that it was the marking of a historical event in Queens history, and that he looks forward to celebrating the 4th of July with the *Jama'at* in years to come. The next speaker was New York City Councilman Leroy Comrie, who spoke about his experience with *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya in the past. Councilman Comrie noted that whenever there is a public event or a need for help, *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya is always in the forefront. After expressing his gratitude for the *Jama'at* celebrating the 4th of July, a little girl named Heather from The Church of the Living God recited a poem, and Alina Ahmad recited "God Bless America."

Next, a journalist who had interviewed some *Lajna* members a few days prior also said a few words regarding women in Islam. She stated that the new generation would be molded well with the morals and principles that a Muslim woman follows.

New York City Mayoral candidate Anthony Weiner also attended the program. He stated that it was a great event to host on the 4th of July, showing the loyalty that the *Jama'at* has for its country, as well as for the local community. Mr. Weiner also said that it was a historical day for the community of Hollis. Mr. Weiner's most powerful remark came when he stated he was Jewish, yet his wife was Muslim, and all that matters is if you are good people, you can always live together. A few other guests were Mr. Toor, who was representing the office of State Assemblyman David Weprin, Mr. Rahman, who is a Democratic candidate for New York City Council, and Mr. Chet, who is the chairman of the Democratic party of New York State.

Towards the end of the formal ceremony, *Imam* Daud Hanif Sahib thanked all the guests and members for coming, and stated a quote by the Holy Prophet[saw], "The love for your country is a part of your faith." *Imam* Daud Hanif Sahib. concluded by saying the *Jama'at* always guides the young generation to be loyal and to make sacrifices for your country, and that *Jama'at* Ahmadiyya has always been loyal to their home country, wherever it may be. The ceremony was then ended with *Imam* Daud Hanif Sahib leading in silent prayer.

After the ceremony, all the guests and members ventured into the backyard of Baituz Zafar to relish in the festivities for the day. There was a Barbecue and some activities for both children and adults, including a playplace and bounce house for the kids. All of the food and refreshments were donations from different organizations that were a part of this celebration. Despite being a scorching 95 degrees temperature, Naeem Ahmad *Sahib* (Secretary *Ziafat*) and his team did an extraordinary job in preparing the cookout.

The event had great media coverage. There were reporters from Channel 7 Eyewitness News, The New York Daily News, National New York Magazine, Forbes Magazine, and The Queens Tribune. Coverage of the event from Daily News can be found on the following link:

http://www.nydailynews.com/news/election/anthony-weiner-talks-mixed-faith-marriage-campaign-event-article-1.1390622

REPORT ON PARADE OF JULY 4, 2013 BY SACRAMENTO, CA CHAPTER

Report by: Mohsan Baig (President: Waheed Maroof)

By the sheer grace of Allah the Almighty, Sacramento Chapter was able to join this year in the July 4th Parade and engage in the local community delivering the peaceful and lovely message of the Holy Prophet Muhammad[saw] about one's loyalty to their country of residence. Sacramento Chapter started the planning for this parade two months ago and worked tirelessly in ensuring all arrangements were accommodated to ensure a successful participation.

On July 4th, members from Sacramento and some *Khuddam* and *Ansar* from Bay Point chapter gathered at the meeting point at 8 am in Rancho Cordova, California. *Alhamdolillah,* the parade participants included *Atfal, Khuddam, Ansar, Nasirat* and *Lajna.*

Waheed Maroof Sahib, President Sacramento Chapter gave out important instructions to members highlighting key etiquettes and *Jama'at* related instructions that should be followed.

The layout of the parade was as follows:

- Flag-bearer at the front
- followed by the Muslims for Loyalty banner
- followed by *Atfal*
- followed by *Nasirat* and *Lajna*
- followed by *Khuddam* and *Ansar*
- One member on each side of the parade to distribute 'Muslims for Loyalty' flyers.

The parade started at 10 am and as soon as the participants got into full force of spreading the love filled, peaceful greetings of July 4th celebration, the temperature took a toll. Despite the scorching triple digit temperature, *Jama'at* members courageously continued with the parade.

The Muslims for Loyalty parade was highly appreciated by thousands of the public who were present alongside the route. The public were rooting, wishing us well and giving standing ovations which continued to energize our *Jama'at* members.

Along the halfway through the parade the judges announced to the public that we belonged to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. Important facts about the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community were read out including the donation of 12,000 bags of blood that have been donated by our community, upon hearing this the public started to root for us louder. Apart from wishing the public a Happy Independence Day, *Alhamdolillah* we were also able to distribute 1200 Muslims for Loyalty flyers to the public who were very appreciative of the message.

The whole purpose of this parade was to show our loyalty to our country and by the grace of Allah we surely achieved this as the Sacramento Bee, the local major newspaper which has over 650,000 readership published our Muslims for Loyalty parade picture on their hard copy paper along with their website, thus helping us spread the peaceful message to further thousands of people throughout the region. This was the first time Sacramento chapter took part in such an activity and all participants thoroughly enjoyed being part of the local community parade. May Allah enable the Sacramento chapter to excel in the field of *Tabligh* and continue to give strength & opportunity to hold similar activities in the near future.

BROTHER AHMAD SAEED OF ST. LOUIS JAMA'AT PAASED AWAY

Hafiz Nasiruddin, Son of Ahmad Saeed

Br. Ahmad Saeed's conversion to Islam would forever change his life and impact those around him. He would officially accept the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in 1949 under the Second *Khalifa*. His conversion came after interrogating his childhood friend, Rashid Ahmad (American), who had just returned from Pakistan. Saeed would ask Rashid, 'what is this Islam you are preaching', and being moved to acceptance, he joined in St. Louis, Missouri. After returning home to East St. Louis, Illinois he would convert all of his friends to Ahmadiyyat.

Br. Saeed was a pioneer in the Ahmadiyya community. Through his organizational and financial efforts, the St. Louis *Jama'at* would purchase a building to be used as their first Mosque at 4401 Oakwood after years of conducting *Jumu'ah* in homes and rented halls. Br. Saeed established Arabic and Islamic studies classes. Through the 1970s and 1980s, he would teach the young, old and new, how to read, recite and memorize Qur'an along with general Islamic education. Br. Saeed would graduate his students with certificates of completion and reward them their very own Holy Qur'ans. These classes were critical to Islamic education and development in St. Louis, as many members were converts without access to an *Imam* or other Muslim members in their families. Along with serving as financial secretary for over 20 years, Br. Saeed established a monthly Youth Day where *Nasirat, Atfal* and *Khuddam* would deliver speeches and recitations to the *Jama'at*. He also established and would coach an ice skating team of speed skaters comprised of local *Atfal* and young *Khadims*. These young Muslim skaters would compete at local and national events. He would demand preparation and excellence in all activities. Br. Saeed would serve his students as teacher, mentor, advisor, coach, uncle and father.

Growing up as the second eldest of seven boys in Huntsville, Alabama and serving in the military during World War II, Br. Saeed appreciated the value of hard work and discipline. His morning call to *Fajr* Prayer and attendance to *Jumu'ah* would be as dependable as the military bugle call to duty. His mantra, "...treat the Mosque better than your own home..." would come to life as he could be found cleaning the mosque early in the day then later leading as an officer of the *Jama'at*. His denial to top universities as a Black youth because of Jim Crow laws and segregation motivated him to encourage both secular and Islamic education in the young and converts. *Tabligh* for him was more than a pamphlet or event but a process of changing the behavior and conditions of people. He was recognized in the community as one ready to offer Islam and lend a hand to improve one's plight in a no-nonsense style.

Br. Saeed was as tough as iron, polished like brass, with a heart sweet like the candy he'd give to the youth every Friday and Sunday. His life resonated the character and commitment of a companion in Islam. He raised boys to men and men to Muslims. A pioneer, his sixty plus years of service to Ahmadiyya bore many fruits. May his struggle and commitment be a reminder and inspiration for us all. May Allah shower him with Mercy.

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَ إِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رٰجِعُوْنَ

To Allah we belong and to Him we shall return.

Laurel Jama'at

- Fourth Of July Celebrations

Laurel Jama'at was given the task to arrange an event during 4th of July to show America that Muslims have the same loyalty as they do. We are American citizens and we have the same love for our country as every other citizen here. The city of Laurel holds our Independence Day on the first Saturday of July every year. We decided that this would be the perfect opportunity for us to hold our event.

Every Tuesday at 9pm, we held a special conference call to go through the update of the event. We wanted to make sure that every individual who was willing and capable of participating had all the information that they needed to make sure this event was as successful as we could make. We had decided during our conference call that we would design T-shirts that say "Muslim for Loyalty" and Ahmadiyya Muslim Community". We divided up into teams that would handle the parade and the booth during the fireworks. During our Booth preparations, we would have timing for individuals to switch and present our Community. Since we could not give away free water bottles, we decided that we would sell the water at .50 cents a bottle. The intent was to give away flyers and talk about Loyalty as people bought water from us. Also, we decided that we should be one of the sponsors during the day.

We started the day at 9am on Montgomery St. We registered with 15 Adults and 10 Kids with a vehicle. We had all the kids hold up mini American Flags and have candy in their hands to give away as they walked in the parade. We had the adults hold up the banner that read "Love of One's Country of residence is part of the faith". On the vehicle, we placed American Flags on the entire car. Then we placed banners on both side of car; "Love for all; Hatred for None" and "Muslims for Loyalty". The vehicle was driven behind us as we walked through the parade. We were number 42 out of 50 participants during the parade.

After the parade, we all went towards the booth, where other members were setting up for the rush during the fireworks. There were many events happening during the day, such as hot dog eating contest, water balloon toss and much more. During the events, many people were starting to ask about whom we were and what we were about. The Mayor of Laurel and the Captain of the Police Department were eager to meet with us. Mayor Craig was the first individual to come to the booth and ask about us. He was extremely pleased with what we were presenting and happy to hear that we were willing to help much as we could for the city. The Captain of the police department went on to let us know that he was extremely pleased with us during the parade. He has been waiting for a Muslim community to come out and speak about peace and loyalty. Also, that we had picked a wonderful day to do it.

We had made a huge impact in the community during the parade that we won an award of being one the most favorable participants from the judges. Our name was given out numerous of times throughout the day. Also, we were mentioned in the Laurel Gazette Newspaper. Many citizens throughout the day had stopped by at our booth to hear and learn about us. The day ended with fireworks and as the citizens were leaving to go home, we were able to give away lots of water and flyers to everyone who passed by.

TaQWA
Department of Taleemul Qur'an & Waqf-e-Ardhi
Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, USA

HIDDEN TREASURES OF THE HOLY QUR'AN

Shehla Ahmad, South Virginia

(This article has been compiled from selective extracts taken from "Revelation, Rationality, Knowledge and Truth" written by Khalifatul masih IV, Hadhrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad (rh), Published by Islam International Publications Ltd., Surrey UK, (1998) p.586-605. It is highly recommended that the book itself is referred to in order to have a complete and in context understanding of the subject.)

(*Continued from the previous issues...last installment*)

وَإِذَا السَّمَآءُ كُشِطَتْ * 81:12

And when the heaven will be peeled off (laid bare).

This verse presents a comparison between the state of Islam in that age and the rise of the worldly powers. It points to a time when the light of the sun of Islam will be wrapped up and the stars of the Muslim heaven will cease to shed light. The non-Muslim world will begin to scale the heavenly heights to learn the secrets of space.

This scenario brings to mind some other verses of the Holy Qur'an which also predict an era of space and air travel. The following are the relevant verses:

وَالسَّمَآءِ ذَاتِ الْحُبُكِ * 51:8

And by the heaven *full* of tracks.

وَالْمُرْسَلٰتِ عُرْفًا ۞ فَالْعٰصِفٰتِ عَصْفًا ۞ وَّالنّٰشِرٰتِ
نَشْرًا ۞ فَالْفٰرِقٰتِ فَرْقًا ۞ 77:2-5

And by those who are sent forth with specific tasks,
And by those who move like the moving of fast winds,
And by those who propagate a goodly propaganda,
And by those who distinguish and discriminate between friends and foes.
These and many other similar verses repeatedly draw the picture of a sky which is extensively used for air travel. It is charted into tracks, messengers flying to and from, and airborne propaganda being carried out extensively. At last, it has become possible for man to fly on the wings of air. Having fulfilled his dream to fly, man would begin to entertain loftier ambitions. He would begin to discern the secrets of the heavens and the heavenly bodies. He would peel off the covers which enwrap them to unveil their mysteries. He would set space stations and posts to watch and monitor what passes in the heavens above him.

وَاِذَا الْجَحِيْمُ سُعِّرَتْ ۞ 81:13

And when the hellfire will be made to rage.

Here the expression hellfire refers to such wars as would create the impression that all hell has broken loose. This is a warning for mankind. Thus, material progress, however massive it may be, cannot be of any avail to man if he gains his worldly ambitions at the cost of God's pleasure. Man may build his own hellfire himself and can create such global tensions as are bound to culminate into hellish wars. Looking back at the history of the two World Wars, this interpretation no longer remains an academic exercise but acquires a substantial threat.

What is TaQWA?

- **TaQWA is a Department of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community** – In 2008, Hazoor[aba] established that the *Taleemul Qur'an* (Education of the Qur'an) and *Waqf-e-Aardhi* (Temporary Devotion) Departments would be joined under one office in every country.
- **TaQWA is our mission** – Every Ahmadi seeks to his life with TaQWA – love and fear of Allah. How can one achieve TaQWA without learning the Qur'an and striving in His way? Thus the mission of the TaQWA Department is to motivate and inspire each of us to integrate the Qur'an into our daily lives so that we may be successful in life, as well as to devote time to help others do the same.
- **TaQWA is our website resource – www.AlTaQWA.us** is the official website of the TaQWA Department in the US. We strive to provide resources to help each of us learn, understand, and adopt the Qur'an in our lives under the guidance of Hadharat Khalifatul Masih[abe], *Ameer Sahib*, and National TaQWA Secretary Sahib.

Inspire | Educate | Mobilize

AHMADIYYA
MUSLIM COMMUNITY
United States of America

129

Agosto-Septiembre, 2013

BOLETÍN AHMADÍA

"Llevaré tu mensaje hasta los últimos rincones de la tierra"

Boletín Oficial de la Comunidad Ahmadía del Islam, USA - Una publicación cuatrimestral, espiritual y educativa

El chanda o la contribución financiera

Resumen del Sermón del Viernes pronunciado por Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V

Desearía recordar a cada áhmadi sus obligaciones respecto a sus contribuciones financieras, o chandas. El chanda no es un ningún impuesto, sino una de las obligaciones mencionadas en el Santo Corán. Al-lah dice:

"Temed pues a Al-lah lo mejor que podáis, escuchad y gastad en Su Causa; esto será bueno para vosotros. Mas quién se salve de su propia avaricia, sepa que éstos son los que serán bienaventurados". "Si ofrendáis a Al-lah un buen préstamo, Él os lo multiplicará y os perdonará, pues Al-lah es el sumo Apreciador, Tolerante".

Dios nos invita a gastar en Su causa para la propagación de Su religión. No sirven de nada las contribuciones que se hacen para complacer a determinadas personas o para competir mutuamente, o simplemente por ostentación.
El sacrificio financiero es una prerrogativa fundamental de las comunidades celestiales. Todas las Yamaats deben intentar en lo posible que los nuevos áhmadis y los niños participen en las iniciativas de Waqfe Yadid Tahrike Yadid aunque sea mediante la donación de un centavo. El Mesías Prometido dice:

"En este mundo el hombre ama desmesuradamente la riqueza. Según los intérpretes de los sueños si alguien ve en un sueño que extrae su hígado para

entregarlo a alguien, significa riqueza. Dios dice: "Nunca podréis alcanzar la rectitud, a menos que gastéis de lo que más os gusta".

Por lo tanto, el gasto en el servicio a la humanidad es el parámetro del nivel de piedad y rectitud de la persona. Podemos comprobar este nivel en la vida de Abu Bakr. Cuando el Santo Profeta requirió tal sacrificio, le entregó todos los bienes que tenía en su vivienda.

Por lo tanto los secretarios de finanzas de la Comunidad como los misioneros deben entrenar a los miembros al respecto. El trabajo de los secretarios de finanzas es mantener contacto personal con cada áhmadi. La tarea no debe relegarse a los auxiliares. Las organizaciones deben instar a los miembros a cooperar con los secretarios financieros y hacerles entender el espíritu de la entrega monetaria. Sin embargo, es tarea de los secretarios financieros acudir a cada vivienda y residencia, especialmente hoy en día, en que abundan los medios para ello.
Por otro lado, este trabajo ha de realizarse con afecto y comprensión. Si la persona se niega a pagar, nunca habrá de mostrarse enojo o severidad. Nadie debe pensar que el sistema de la Comunidad funciona gracias a su contribución económica.
Dios prometió al Mesías Prometido que nunca atravesaría dificultades económicas y que la tarea continuaría con la ayuda de Dios. Su única preocupación era que el dinero de las donaciones se utilizara correctamente.

Intentamos asegurarnos que los gastos se empleen del modo más correcto posible. Si se detecta algún descuido, se adoptan medidas, y para ello se ha establecido un sistema de auditoría. Es responsabilidad de la Comunidad, especialmente del Amir, controlar meticulosamente los gastos, por lo que no se aprueban necesariamente todas las facturas. El sistema de auditoría ha de ser efectivo e independiente, de forma que los auditores puedan trabajar con plena autoridad.

En cuanto a los gastos, quisiera aclarar que la MTA supone una gran inversión, por lo que se emprenden iniciativas separadas y se recaudan fondos aparte con este fin, pero al ser utilizados cinco satélites en todo el mundo, los gastos son ingentes, y no pueden ser cubiertos por estos fondos. Por ello, también se utilizan fondos del presu-

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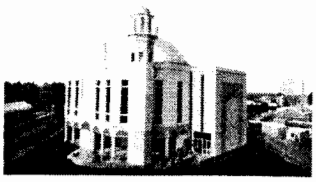

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P.O. Box 226, Chauncey, OH 45719

Del Sagrado Corán

Cuanto hay en los cielos y la tierra glorifica a A-lah, pues Él es el Poderoso, el Sabio.
Suyo es el reino de los cielos y la tierra; Él da la vida y causa la muerte; y Él tiene poder sobre todas las cosas.
Él es el Primero y el Último, el Manifiesto y el Oculto, y Él conoce muy bien todas las cosas.
Él es Quien creó los cielos y la tierra en seis períodos, y después se asentó en el Trono. Conoce lo que entra en la tierra, así como lo que baja del cielo y sube a él. Él está con vosotros dondequiera que estéis, pues Al-lah ve todo lo que hacéis.

(C. 57: V. 2-6)

Hadiz (Relatos del Santo Profeta (sa))

Abu Hurairah relata que el Santo Profeta, la paz y bendiciones de Al-lah sean con él, dijo:
"Al-lah dice: Quien muestre enemistad con quien mantiene amistad conmigo debería de tener cuidado de tener que luchar conmigo. Cuando mi siervo intenta acercarse a mí a través de lo que más me agrada de lo que he hecho obligatorio sobre él, y sigue avanzando hacia Mí mediante un esfuerzo voluntario fuera de lo prescrito, entonces empiezo a amarlo. Cuando Yo lo amo me convierto en sus oídos por el que oye, sus ojos con los que ve, sus manos con las que agarra, y sus pies con los que camina. Cuando me pide, le concedo, y cuando busca mi protección lo protejo".

(Bujari)

Escritos del Mesías Prometido

Nuestro paraíso es nuestro Dios. Nuestra máxima felicidad descansa en Él. Yo lo he visto y he encontrado en Él toda la belleza. Es un tesoro que merece ser adquirido aun a costa de nuestra vida; una joya digna de ser comprada aunque nuestra vida se extinguiera para obtenerla. Vosotros, los desposeídos: apresuraos hacia este manantial para que colme vuestra sed. Es la fuente de la vida que os salvará de la perdición. ¿Qué puedo hacer para implantar esta buena nueva en los corazones? ¿Con qué clarines puedo anunciar que éste es vuestro Dios? ¿Qué remedio puedo aplicar para que vuestros oídos escuchen mi voz? Si os hacéis de Dios, tened la certeza de que Él será vuestro.

(Rohani Jazain (Tesoros Espirituales), Vol. 19; Nuestras Enseñanzas, pág. 16).

Mirza Ghulam Ahmad
(1835-1908)

CARTA DE HAZUR

En el nombre de Al-lah, el Clemente, el Misericordioso
Alabamos a Dios e invocamos Sus bendiciones en Su Noble Mensajero y sobre su siervo, el Mesías Prometido.
Con la gracia y la misericordia de Dios
Él es el Socorredor

Respetable Waseem Sayed Ahmad Sahib, América:

Assalamo Alaikum wa Rahmatul-lahe Barakatuhu

He recibido un fax en el que menciona que tiene previsto viajar a Baypoint, CA para organizar totalmente los esfuerzos de Tabligh entre la población latinoamericana. Esto está bien. Que Dios sea su Ayudante y Amigo en su viaje y le ayude a tener éxito en sus objetivos. Que Al-lah, el Exaltado, le conceda más baits que los que se ha propuesto. Que Al-lah, el Exaltado, esté con usted y le ayude le apoye.

Wassalam,
(Firmado) Mirza Masroor Ahnmad
Khalifatul Masih al-Jamis
5 de Agosto, 2013

Recepción en el parlamento británico para celebrar El centenario de la Comunidad Ahmadía en el Reino Unido

El Jalifa visitó Westminster para pronunciar el discurso de apertura en una recepción especial organizada por Ed Davey, Secretario de Estado para la Energía y el Cambio Climático, y el grupo parlamentario All Party de la Comunidad Musulmana Ahmadía, en reconocimiento y celebración del Centenario de la Comunidad Musulmana Ahmadía en el Reino Unido. Los procedimientos formales comenzaron con un breve discurso de bienvenida ofrecida por Ed Davey, quien dijo:

"Es un verdadero privilegio para nosotros ser anfitriones en el día de hoy de la Comunidad musulmana Ahmadía. Conocemos bien el impresionante trabajo que Su Santidad realiza por la casusa de la paz, al igual que los miembros de la Comunidad Ahmadía. Por lo tanto es muy oportuno que muchos miembros del Parlamento estén aquí presentes para darles las gracias por ser miembros leales y diligentes de nuestra sociedad".

Nick Clegg, el Viceprimer Ministro dijo: "Los valores más importantes y la ética que la Comunidad Ahmadía ha transmitido con firmeza a millones de personas en todo el mundo son, por supuesto, los de la paz, el amor y la reconciliación, y este es un mensaje duradero y poderoso en todo momento, para todas las edades y todas las comunidades... Nos unimos a vosotros, al margen de afiliaciones políticas o antecedentes religiosos, en la celebración de la presencia de su Comunidad durante más de 100 años aquí en el Reino Unido, así como también celebramos el mensaje que la Comunidad ha difundido y transmitido, con voz tranquila, pero con firmeza y dignidad durante tanto tiempo, de paz, amor y reconciliación."

Douglas Alexander, Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores dijo: "En un mundo con diversidad y retos crecientes, este mensaje de reconciliación se necesita incluso más que antes. Quisiera dejar constancia de nuestra admiración por el liderazgo que usted (Hazur) ha mostrado a nivel personal y que su comunidad ha mostrado a nivel colectivo; por el trabajo que habéis realizado, la diferencia que habéis creado y el servicio que continuáis prestando no sólo para los miembros de la Comunidad Ahmadía sino también como portavoces en favor de la tolerancia, la reconciliación y la paz. "Amor para todos, odio para nadie" es una filosofía de la que todos podemos beneficiarnos y de la que tenemos mucho que aprender en los próximos años."

Theresa May, Ministra del Interior dijo: "Su Santidad ha demostrado y continúa demostrando que la única manera efectiva de disuadir a los extremistas de sus convicciones perniciosas es el diálogo pacífico. Este es el mensaje que ofrecéis en todo el mundo y al que todos debemos escuchar y prestar atención. Sé que vuestra Comunidad ha sido objeto de agresiones, especialmente en Pakistán, donde constituye un delito penal para los áhmadis llamarse a sí mismos musulmanes, y donde habéis sido objeto de algunos ataques horribles. Estoy absolutamente comprometida con la lucha contra todas las formas de extremismo dondequiera que ocurran... Tengo plena confianza en que dentro de 100 años habrá un grupo de gente que celebrará los 200 años de la Comunidad Ahmadía del Islam en Gran Bretaña. Gracias por todo lo que habéis aportado en el Reino Unido, no sólo aquí, sino también en el resto del mundo a través de vuestro mensaje".

Durante su discurso de apertura Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad habló del compromiso de la Comunidad musulmana Ahmadía con la paz y la tolerancia, insistió en la importancia de la lealtad al país como parte de la fe islámica; condenó enérgicamente el reciente asesinato brutal de un soldado británico en Londres, y rechazó absolutamente el concepto de la Yihad violenta en el mundo actual, apelando a la justicia con el fin de salvaguardar al mundo de la guerra y el conflicto.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad dijo que la lealtad a la patria era una parte esencial de la fe islámica, y que había sido "prescrito con énfasis" por el Santo Profeta Muhammad (la paz sea con él). Dijo que todos los musulmanes áhmadis que viven en el Reino Unido desean "el progreso y la prosperidad de esta gran nación." Su Santidad también elogió al público británico por dar la bienvenida a los inmigrantes en el Reino Unido lo cual les ha permitido convertirse en "parte del tejido de la sociedad británica."

El Jalifa continuó afirmando que a lo largo de sus 100 años de existencia en el Reino Unido, la Comunidad musulmana Ahmadía siempre ha promovido la paz y ha rechazado toda forma de extremismo.

El líder mundial continuó condenando y rechazando el concepto de "Jihad violenta". Aceptó con pesar que algunos eruditos "que se autodenominan" musulmanes promueven tales enseñanzas, pero dijo que estaban completamente equivocados y son los responsables de la formación de diversos grupos terroristas y la radicalización de ciertos individuos.

Describió el carácter bondadoso del Santo Profeta Mohammad (sa), que predicó un mensaje de paz, amor y bondad. Afirmó que la libertad religiosa era un principio fundamental del Islam. Dijo: "El Islam se opone totalmente a la coacción y el extremismo; al contrario, aboga por la paz y la armonía en todos los niveles de la sociedad".

El Jalifa concluyó hablando de la necesidad fundamental de la justicia en el mundo moderno. Dijo que temía que los conflictos actuales pudieran derivar en una guerra mundial, a menos que se eliminaran todas las formas de discriminación y desigualdad y se adopte la justicia, integridad y honestidad. El evento concluyó con una oración en silencio y, posteriormente, los invitados acudieron a saludar personalmente a Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad.

A las celebraciones del Centenario atendieron 68 dignatarios, entre ellos 30 diputados y 12 miembros de la Cámara de los Lores, incluyendo a 6 ministros del Gabinete y 2 ministros. Varios medios de comunicación como la BBC, ITV y Sky TV también estuvieron presentes para cubrir el evento.

Antes del evento los tres principales líderes políticos del Reino Unido remitieron sendos escritos en apoyo del Centenario. A la vez que felicitaba a la Comunidad Ahmadía del Islam, el Primer Ministro, David Cameron dijo que Gran Bretaña puede estar orgullosa de la Comunidad y elogió a Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad como "un hombre de paz."

Humanity First Guatemala

Voluntarios de Humanity First tratan a más de 2500 guatemaltecos durante la clínica Don de la Salud

Un equipo de estudiantes y médicos voluntarios de Humanity First viajaron a Guatemala para el la tercera gira "Don de la Salud" de Humanity First del 17 al 24 de agosto del 2013. Durante esta semana el equipo médico ha proporcionado cuidados básicos primarios a aquellos que lo necesitaban. El equipo de voluntarios de los Estados Unidos incluía a médicos experimentados, estudiantes procedentes de distintos estados, así como un dentista.

Bajo la guía del director ejecutivo de Humanity First Guatemala, David Gonzalez, el equipo de voluntarios de los Estados Unidos y Guatemala proporcionó atención primaria y medicinas gratuitas a los pacientes de Santa María de Jesús y a las comunidades vecinas.

El gran equipo de voluntarios estudiantes fue más numeroso que el equipo de profesionales médicos de EEUU y Guatemala y participaron realizando exámenes médicos y dentales, y dispensando medicinas en la farmacia. Además, los voluntarios practicaron el español, aprendieron a prescribir tratamientos (bajo la supervisión de los médicos), etc.

Por la gracia de Allah y gracias a la dedicación y el duro trabajo de los voluntarios, se trataron a más de 2500 pacientesen la clínica "Don de la Salud", que además recibieron medicinas gratuitas, donaciones y paquetes higiénicos.

El equipo de Estados Unidos estaba liderado por la Dra. Saleha Ahmed de Houston, Texas, y las clínicas pediátricas y dentales, por el Dr. Zarar Bajwa y el Dr. Tahir Khan. Este equipo de profesionales de la salud, que incluye al cirujano Dr. Ahmed como coordinador de la clínica, no sólo proporcionó atención médica a la población local, sino que proporcionó un gran co-

Experiencia personal de una voluntaria

"Y todo el bien que hagáis, Allah en verdad lo conoce." [4:128]

El cuerpo diminuto del niño estaba cubierto de suciedad y de heridas abiertas. Muchos de nosotros nos acercamos a la sala de pediatría mientras los médicos le quitaban cuidadosamente la ropa para limpiar su cuerpo, aplicarle pomada en la piel y cubrir las heridas con una gasa. Siendo demasiado joven para comprender que los médicos estaban tratando de ayudarle a pesar del dolor, se aferraba a su madre en medio de sollozos que hacían eco en la habitación. Las lágrimas llenaron mis ojos al ver cómo intentaba calmar a su hijo, meciéndolo de un lado a otro, y pensé en las dificulades que su madre había tenido que atravesar cada día sin ninguno de estos medicamentos o recursos.

Le pedimos que volviera al día siguiente, el último día de la clínica. Antes del viaje, estuvimos recogiendo donaciones de suministros médicos y recibimos un gran cargamento de vendas de gasa. En aquel momento, pensé que aquello era excesivo para nuestro viaje, pero ahora parecían ser una bendición de Dios. Mientras esperábamos a la tarde siguiente, finalmente llegó con su hijo, y eran los últimos pacientes de la clínica. Cuando el niño se dio cuenta de lo que iba a ocurrir, abrazó a su madre y las lágrimas brotaron de nuevo. Los médicos limpiaron sus heridas y volvieron a aplicarle los ungüentos y gasas. Además le dimos a la madre toda la pomada y gasa sobrante y ropa de algodón para él. El valor y afecto de la madre eran inimaginables, y presenciar este momento - uno de los muchos acontecimientos de esta semana - fue una experiencia conmovedora. Estas experiencias continúan fortaleciendo cada vez más mi fe, y han reforzado mi convicción de dedicar mi vida al servicio de la humanidad, la esencia del Islam. Que Allah haga nuestros corazones sinceros y desinteresados, y nos

Para quienes estén interesados en liderar o prestar servicios voluntarios en los proyectos médicos de Humanity First Guatemala u otros proyectos, por favor envíen un email a info@humanityfirst.gt con su experiencia personal, disponibilidad e interés.

Ahmadiyya Movement in Islam, Inc. publica el Boletín Ahmadía USA en la siguiente dirección:

Fazl-i-Umar Press, P.O. Box 226, Chauncey, OH 45719

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

PETER T. KING
THIRD DISTRICT
NEW YORK

June 29, 2013

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to congratulate Ahmadiyya Muslim Community on its annual convention. The dedication, commitment and contributions it has made to rejecting terrorism and promoting peace are exemplary.

In a troubled and violent world I am proud to have an ally like the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in the battle against terrorism. I thank all those assembled here today for your efforts to promote peace within your communities and I wish you all continued success in your future endeavors.

All the best.

Sincerely,

PETER T. KING
Member of Congress

HON. TOM REED
23RD DISTRICT
NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515

June 29, 2013

Dear Friends of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA,

Congratulations to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA on its 65th Jalsa Salana Annual Convention!

I join with the many people world-wide who admire your work to take a stand against the persecution of peaceful Muslims and Christians in Pakistan and around the globe. Those of different religions can peacefully co-exist and work together toward the mutual goal of a world free from fear and violence based on one's beliefs or ethnicity.

I very much enjoyed a recent visit I had in Washington from Naveed Malik. I appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the work of the Amadiyya Muslim Community and we stand by your efforts to freely and peacefully participate in democracy.

I wish you peace and a successful 2013 conference.

Best Regards,

Tom Reed
Member of Congress
NY-23

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CHAIR, CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATIC CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

CO-CHAIR, CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUS ON VIETNAM

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

ZOE LOFGREN
19TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

June 29, 2013

Dear Friends,

I regret that I am not able to join you in person this weekend but I would like to extend warm greetings to all that are gathered today to attend the 65th Annual Jalsa Salana USA.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community advocates for peace, tolerance and universal human rights. I stand with you in your support for these principles and commend you for your continued efforts to further these values.

I wish you a successful and productive conference.

Sincerely,

Zoe Lofgren

Member of Congress

BRIAN E. FROSH
16th Legislative District
Montgomery County

Chair
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Vice Chair
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Legislative Policy Committee

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District Office
7315 Wisconsin Avenue, Suite 860W
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
301-652-2858

June 21, 2013

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, U.S.A.
15000 Good Hope Road
Silver Spring, MD 20905

Dear Members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community:

Congratulations on the celebration of the 65th annual meeting of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. As the oldest American-Islamic organization in the United States, you have played a special role in the enrichment of our culture through your teachings of non-violence, charity, and religious tolerance.

The annual meeting of Ahmadis in the U.S. provides a benefit not only to your Community, but also to our greater society. By gathering to reinforce your faith and values, you build upon a spirit of generosity and compassion that continues to spread among your neighbors. As we see in diverse states like Maryland, this spirit of religiously-inspired selflessness benefits all citizens.

Thank you for your efforts to promote peaceful coexistence and cooperation in a world that seems increasingly divided. We can only hope that people from all religious backgrounds will continue to be inspired by your example.

Sincerely

Brian E. Frosh

NIKI TSONGAS
3RD DISTRICT, MASSACHUSETTS
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June 29, 2013

Dear Friends,

I am writing to thank you very much for inviting me to attend the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's 65th Annual Convention in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Although I will be unable to attend I hope you and the organization have a wonderful Convention and will please keep me in mind for future events. I commend you for your work towards building peace, tolerance and universal human rights.

It has always been a pleasure working with your organization and I was happy to sign on to the Dear Colleague Letter to Secretary Kerry back in April. I look forward to working with you in the future and please feel free to contact me if I ever may be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Niki Tsongas

Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky
9th District
Illinois

Member of Congress
Washington, D.C.
202-225-2111

June 28, 2013

Dear Friends:

I would like to congratulate the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA during your 65th annual Jalsa Salana peace conference in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania this weekend. Unfortunately, due to schedule constraints, I will not be able to attend this conference.

In a world where there is still too much hatred and violence, your ongoing efforts to build peace within our communities is so important. I appreciate and commend your work towards building peace.

I look forward to hearing about this conference from the members of your community who are my constituents in the 9th Congressional District of Illinois.

Best wishes on a successful peace conference!

Sincerely,

Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

TAMMY DUCKWORTH
8TH DISTRICT, ILLINOIS

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

www.duckworth.house.gov

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info.duckworth@mail.house.gov

June 29, 2013

Dr. Ehasanullah Zafar
Head of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA
1500 Good Hope Road
Silver Spring, MD 20905

Dear Friends,

I am honored to welcome you to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA's 65th Annual Convention. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's commitment to promoting a message of peace reminds us of the significant contributions American Muslims make to our country.

For nearly a century, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community has been an integral part of American society. Your tremendous humanitarian work, including disaster relief efforts, as well as your advocacy for universal human rights, religious liberties and tolerance continues to demonstrate the core values on which our country was founded. The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's emphasis on civic engagement is admirable and I am honored to acknowledge and extend my gratitude for your strong tradition of service across this great country.

Congratulations on a successful event. I wish all of you the best and look forward to seeing all the great work that you will accomplish in the years ahead.

Sincerely,

Tammy Duckworth

Tammy Duckworth
Member of Congress
Illinois' 8th District

DAVID PRICE
4TH DISTRICT
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June 19, 2013

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA
c/o Mr. Shamim Malik
Research Triangle Chapter
102 Avenue of the Estates
Cary, NC 27518

Dear Mr. Malik:

I appreciate your gracious invitation to the 65th annual Jalsa Salana of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, and I regret that I cannot attend.

I commend the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community's efforts to promote religious freedom, human rights, and tolerance, as embodied in the motto, "Love for All, Hatred for None." I have enjoyed learning more about the Community's efforts abroad and at home, and I look forwarding to continuing to work with your members in the Fourth Congressional District in the years ahead.

I wish you all a productive and successful annual convention.

Sincerely,

David Price

David Price
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

United International Religious Freedom

July 8, 2013 | Katrina Lantos Swett

The following appeared in Eurasia Review on July 4th, 2013.

Last Saturday, on June 29, I was honored to speak in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania to the Ahmadiyya Muslim American Community's 65th Annual Convention.

For the past several years, the Ahmadiyya have chosen Harrisburg for their convention, just days before America's July 4 celebration.

Two hours east of Harrisburg is Philadelphia, where our Declaration of Independence was signed on that date. Less than an hour south is Gettysburg, where 150 years ago, in the days leading up to July 4, a crucial Civil War battle was raging.

Philadelphia is where America, through its Declaration, proclaimed that people are born equal and free. Gettysburg is where the nation, through an otherwise terrible war, began to turn those words more fully into deeds, leading to a new birth of freedom upon the abolition of slavery. And last Saturday, Harrisburg was where we reaffirmed America's declaration that freedom -- including freedom of religion or belief -- is not just for Americans, but for everyone, including Ahmadiyya Muslims and others.

Founded in India in 1889, the Ahmadiyya community is known for its respect for tolerance and freedom. Claiming tens of millions of adherents worldwide, its members have lived in our country for nearly a century. Following 9/11, America's Ahmadiyya community literally gave its blood for our nation, eventually donating over 25,000 live-saving units in memory of those who fell that day.

While in many ways, Ahmadiyya precepts mirror our values, these values continue to come under harsh assault globally.

Nearly three-fourths of the world's people live in nations where freedom of religion and related human rights are under brutal siege. That includes millions of Ahmadiyya members.

For nearly four decades, the constitution of Pakistan has deemed all Ahmadiyya "non- Muslims."

For more than a quarter century, its government has barred them from calling their worship centers "mosques," publicly uttering the traditional Islamic greeting or quoting from the Qur'an, and displaying Islam's basic affirmation. Ahmadiyya are prohibited from sharing their beliefs with others or disseminating their material. They are restricted from building houses of worship and holding public gatherings. And since they must register as non-Muslims to vote, Ahmadiyyas effectively are disenfranchised.

Coupled with Pakistan's blasphemy laws, these statutes have helped foster a climate of intimidation and violence against Ahmadiyya members.

In Indonesia, since June 2008, the government has restricted Ahmadiyya activity to private worship and prohibited members from sharing their faith. In parts of East and West Java and elsewhere, extremist religious groups press local officials to close places of worship or ban Ahmadiyya activity altogether.

In Saudi Arabia, Ahmadiyya members have been deported for their beliefs. In Egypt, they have been charged under its blasphemy laws. In Kazakhstan, the government's application of its Religion Law has denied their legal legitimacy.

The same societies that violate the religious freedom of Ahmadiyya abuse the rights of others. As USCIRF has documented, where Ahmadiyya suffer, Hindus and Christians, Sikhs and Baha'is, Shi'a and other Muslims, often are persecuted as well.

In order to protect the rights of all, including the Ahmadiyya, and foster peaceful, stable societies, Washington needs to make religious freedom a key foreign policy priority.

The U.S. government also should confront nations which single out the Ahmadiyya for persecution. For example, it should press Pakistan to amend its constitution and rescind all anti-Ahmadiyya laws. It should urge Indonesia to overturn its 2008 decree and all provincial bans against Ahmadiyya religious practice. It should press both governments to investigate acts of violence thoroughly and prosecute perpetrators vigorously. And until Pakistan proves itself serious about reform, USCIRF believes that it qualifies as a "country of particular concern."

Today, we honor our founding Declaration. We remember that freedoms are not privileges for rulers to bestow or withhold, but unalienable rights ordained by a just and merciful Creator, which no person or government can abuse without surrendering moral authority and legitimacy.

**Katrina Lantos Swett is the Chair of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF).*

Muslim peace conference draws 5,000+ on first of three days in Harrisburg

Jumu 'ah (Friday Prayers) took place during The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 65th Jalsa Salana at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex on June 28, 2013. The annual peace conference runs through Sunday June 30, 2013. Christine Baker | cbaker@pennlive.com

1 / 11

(http://pennlive.mycapture.com backtext=Return%20to%20the

Print (http://blog.pennlive.com/midstate_impact/print.html?entry=/2013/06/muslim_peace_conference_draws.html)

(http://connect.pennlive.com/staff/previti/index.html) By Emily Previti | eprevitl@pennlive.com (http://connect.pennlive.com/staff/previti/posts.html)

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on June 28, 2013 at 10:34 PM, updated July 02, 2013 at 9:16 AM

(http://ads.pennlive.com/RealMed

HARRISBURG – More than 5,000 people attended the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex Friday, the first of three days of the nation's longest running Muslim conference.

The community's 65th annual Jalsa Salana peace conference is free and runs 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. until noon Sunday.

It is open to the public - and organizers encourage non-Muslims to attend.

That's one of the main points of the event, said the community's national vice-president Dr. Nasim Rehmatullah and national spokesman Qasim Rashid.

Rashid said the most important activities offered during the entire three-day affair probably are the facilitated group discussions about the prophet Muhammad, the foundations of Islam and the Ahmadiyya Muslim community's prophet Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, who stressed a denouncement of bloodshed in favor of patience and unity as one of the sect's defining tenets.

"The point is to have a conversation." – national spokesman Qasim Rashid

"The point is to have a conversation," Rashid said.

And that, Rehmatullah said, is key to avoiding the confusion he says persists nationally about Islam.

Neither the national organization, nor the local chapter, however, have experienced much of that confusion in Harrisburg.

Rashid said the group picked Pennsylvania's capital city as the event's host for four years running not only for its central geographic location within a four-hour drive of two-thirds of the country's population, but also the welcoming attitude of residents and the local government.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA 65th Jalsa Salana (http://videos.pennlive.com/patriot-news/2013/06/the_ahmadiyya_muslim_community.html)

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA 65th Jalsa Salana got underway at the Pennsylvania Farm Show Complex on June 28, 2013. The annual peace conference runs through Sunday June 30, 2013. Christine Baker | cbaker@pennlive.com

Mayor Linda Thompson and state Rep. Patty Kim, D-Harrisburg, are among local elected officials slated to attend this weekend's event, which features speeches, group prayer, readings and food.

Ahmadiyya Muslim Community chapters in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh are among the oldest in the United States, Rashid said.

While newer and smaller, Harrisburg's chapter has a distinctive story.

The community founded Hadee Mosque at 245 Division St., formerly Lakeside Lutheran Church.

Nearly three years later, the main atrium remains unchanged, with pews preserved in rows, as a place for interfaith prayer and worship, said Dr. Mubashir Mumtaz, spokesman for the Muslim Community and chief of cardiothoracic surgery at Pinnacle Health.

On the heels of Sept. 11, and after more recent acts of terrorism in Boston, London and Paris, **people in Harrisburg and the surrounding region seemed far from confused a (http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2010/09/on_911_muslims_see_** the **distinction between Islamic extremists linked to those events and the Ahmadiyya Muslims (http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2011/05/central_pennsylvania_** on Division Street and mosques in other nearby communities, Mumatz said.

"It's always been a house of God, we just transferred the brethren to another, and continue the the same welfare and community-building efforts," he said.

FIRST EVER CHARITY CLINIC
UNDER THE BANNER OF AMMA
AHMADIYYA MUSLIM MEDICAL ASSOCIATION
AND HUMANITY FIRST

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Medical Association has developed a model charity clinic. This model is completely independent and self-sustaining. The first ever such charity clinic has been in operation in the small town of Section, AL for the last six months. The clinic is successfully treating patients without regard to their health insurance status.

The official inauguration of the clinic was in April, 2013. City mayor, representative of local chamber of commerce and many other community leaders were present and welcomed our efforts.

This clinic is operating under the leadership of Dr. Younis M. Ismail, a nurse practitioner and other staff. The clinic is open five days a week from 8am to 4pm. On average there are 10 to 15 patients a day.

Requesting prayers for the AMMA team

Dr. Lutf U. Rehman

President, AMMA (Ahmadiyya Muslim Medical Association)

Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aba}: Visit to Los Angeles, CA

Maulana Shamshad A. Nasir

Falahuddin Shams

Dr. Waseem Sayed

Maulana Rizwan Hameed Khan

Bilal Rana

Jalal Latif

Maulana Azhar Haneef

Maulana Naseem Mahdi

Dr. Faheem Younus

Last Day
lah much

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ
حَسَنَةٌ لِمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ
وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

Scenes from 2013 USA Jalsa Salana

EXIT

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4th of July activities of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Sacramento Chapter

Br. Ahmad Saeed of St. Louis passed away on 7/28/13

Br. Ahmad Saeed with Hadhrat Khalifatul Masih III*rh*

Book Stall and 4th of July activities of Ahmadiyya Muslim Communities of New York Area

Tabligh event organized by Ahmadiyyam Muslim Community, Minnesota